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Shahal gives up new portfolio 'to save the government harm'

SARAH HONIG and EVELYN GORDON

POLICE Minister Moshe Shahal yesterday relinquished the information-coordination portfolio created for him, saying he was bowing to public pressure and making a personal sacrifice to avert possible damage to the government.

He lashed out against the "hypocrisy" of Labor MKs, who he said tried to sabotage his appointment, and against "political backstabbing" by his fellow ministers.

"There are those who have turned hypocrisy into an art," Shahal said, in explaining his decision to a coalition meeting. "I have no complaint about those whose opinions differ from mine. But I do have a complaint against those who don't have the courage to say what they believe."

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, meanwhile, came out strongly in favor of an information ministry at the coalition meeting, and said he regrets Shahal's decision.

It was a group from Labor's Young Guard, he said, that persuaded him of the need for such a ministry, when they complained to him the party was failing to explain its achievements and that "some of its representatives were damaging the government's achievements by their words and deeds."

In foreign policy, he said, Labor's accomplishments "are clear beyond a doubt." But in domestic policy, too many people do not know that, for instance, "we created more sources of employment in one year than the Likud created in four."

"Don't the ministers in each field know how to explain what

they are doing?" interjected Avraham Poraz (Meretz).

"Judging by the reactions of the MKs, they apparently haven't succeeded in the field of education [headed by Meretz minister Amnon Rubinstein]," Rabin shot back, referring to the many Labor MKs who support a budgetary amendment to institute a long school day.

"This is the only government that has done anything in the field of education, and you [the MKs] are bringing it into question. Is there a government in the last 15 or 17 years that has done what we have done?"

"There is a place for a ministry of information," Rabin said, "and you [MKs] should start to recognize what this government has done!"

There was almost universal relief in Labor at Shahal's announcement, even though Rabin and Labor Secretary-General Nissim Zivili continued to maintain that the "new ministry was really necessary to highlight the government's achievements to the public, which is unaware of how well this government is doing," as he put it.

However, the only real reason for it, it is privately admitted in Labor, was to compensate Shahal for the loss of the Energy portfolio to Yit'ud's Gonen Segov. Rabin's and Zivili's defense is really an attempt to save face, say insiders.

Shahal handed Rabin a letter yesterday morning announcing his decision not to accept the new portfolio. The two spoke for less than 15 minutes and Rabin asked (Continued on Page 2)

Shahal loses bird in the bush, but keeps one in hand

COMMENT

SARAH HONIG

DID Police Minister Moshe Shahal really evince a generosity of spirit and political altruism when he relinquished the information-coordination portfolio before he actually had it? There was no one in Labor who credited Shahal with high-minded motives.

No one failed to point out that the portfolio promised Shahal was a bird in the bush. The fact Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin decided to create this strange ministerial concoction and award it to Shahal did not put it safely in his hands. The appointment still would have had to be approved by the Knesset.

A hint of how difficult that might have been was provided by how narrowly the appointment passed in the cabinet last Sunday. Only the fact that two ministers switched their votes at the last minute—in order to spare Rabin a terrible humiliation—saved his proposal from abject defeat. Moreover, in the cabinet Rabin could combine Shahal's appointment with that of Yit'ud's Gonen Segov as energy minister. In the Knesset, no such combinations are possible and this is a crucial difference.

Shahal was warned by friend and foe alike that the Knesset was about to deliver him an unprecedented blow to his prestige. The Segov appointment was seen as a shoe-in, sure of winning majority approval. But Shahal's appointment was judged likely to fail miserably, because Meretz's dozen MKs vigorously oppose it. Labor's own rebels were emboldened by Meretz, and, led by maverick Hagai Merom, also threatened to vote against installing

Shahal as "a propaganda commissar," as Merom labeled it.

After he in effect signed the death warrant for the appointment, Merom then urged Shahal to relinquish it. This was an offer Shahal could not refuse. There was no other face-saving alternative.

But Shahal is hardly the loser here. He can pretend to have come to the aid of his party. If there is a loser in this episode, it is Rabin.

His decision to create this curious new ministry is now more than an embarrassment and the fact that Shahal could not accept it only underscores Rabin's gross error of judgment, Labor insiders say. And Shahal, after all, has been promoted. He is now a member—along with Foreign Minister Shimon Peres and Environment Minister Yossi Sarid of Meretz—of the select ministerial committee on negotiations. This is sure to win him lots of media exposure and photo-opportunities with Yasser Arafat. With the primaries around the corner, a good spot in the limelight is just what Shahal needs. He can claim he is now No. 3 in the party hierarchy—after Rabin and Peres.

This puts him significantly ahead of his fellow ministers in what is known in Labor as the "middle generation" political club. These are his fiercest rivals and several have prime ministerial ambitions, like Shahal himself. This grouping includes Uzi Baram, Binyamin Ben-Eliezer, David Liba'i, Avraham Shohat, Ephraim Sneh, and Shimon Shevret.

It is no accident these very ministers were the ones who rushed to Rabin last Sunday and expressed their vehement opposition to Shahal's new appointment. They were especially unhappy with his inclusion in the negotiations team. This is a bird in hand Shahal gets to keep.

Rabin, Peres may reconsider Efrat expansion plans

HERB KEINON

PRIME Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres agreed last night to reevaluate the expansion of Efrat, following a day of confrontation between security forces and residents of neighboring El Khader and their supporters, a government source said last night.

According to the source, Peres told Rabin that unless tempers are calmed over the construction of a new Efrat neighborhood, negotiations over the next phase of implementation of the peace process may be jeopardized. Similar sentiments were expressed yesterday by Environment Minister Yossi Sarid.

But two Labor MKs told a gathering of Gush Etzion residents last night the development of Efrat and the "greater Jerusalem area" must continue.

Avigdor Kahanani said Rabin showed him development plans for Gush Etzion, "and I will make sure he doesn't go back on these promises... Keep building Tamar," he said, referring to the name of the disputed hill.

"We have joint goals, and those joint goals are Greater Jerusalem, which includes Gush Etzion," Emanuel Zissman said. He referred to a map and said eventually Gush Etzion "would stretch north to Ma'aleh Adumim, and Ma'aleh Adumim south to Gush Etzion."

Authorities arrested 54 people during confrontations between security forces and protesters who gathered on the hill midway between El Khader and Efrat, both of which claim ownership of it. Among those arrested were 13 left-wing Israeli activists. Eight women arrested were released from custody last night. Four persons were lightly injured, according to police spokesmen.



An El Khader woman tries to prevent a soldier from arresting another demonstrator yesterday at the disputed hilltop near Efrat. Security forces arrested 54 at the protest. (AP)

Among those involved in the scuffles was Saeb Erekat, the Palestinian Authority's minister for local government, who refused to leave the site when asked to do so by police. He tried several times

to intercede on behalf of El Khader residents being dragged from the scene, and was involved in pushing and shoving matches with the police.

Chndr. Alec Ron, head of the Judea and Samaria police dis-

trict, said Erekat kicked a police officer. Erekat said he was thrown to the ground and "beaten" by Israeli soldiers.

The confrontation began at 9 a.m., when dozens of soldiers and policemen were given the or-

der to remove a group of some 200 people from the hill, many of whom had slept there the previous night. A few tents were pitched on the hill that overlooks the Judean Hills and Jerusalem, and protesters yelled slogans and held signs reading, "Yes To Dismantling Settlements," and "No To Settlements, Yes To Peace."

Within 10 minutes the security forces, including women soldiers charged with dragging away female demonstrators, had cleared the hill. The demonstrators offered passive resistance, and were dragged and pulled away screaming. Those arrested were placed in army trucks; some tore the truck canvas and spat at people walking to the site from the direction of Efrat.

About an hour after the hill was cleared, two bulldozers began clearing land. Demonstrators who were not arrested were pushed down the slope of the hill, facing El Khader.

It was there the second round of the confrontation began, touched off when civil administration workers began driving away trailers filled with uprooted olive-tree seedlings the villagers had planted Sunday.

The villagers refused to clear the road so the trailers could pass, and when the army began pushing people out of the way, mayhem erupted. It was during this melee that Erekat became involved.

A short time afterward, Hadas MKs Tamar Gozansky and Saleh Salim arrived. While Salim agreed to leave, Gozansky refused to do so, claiming parliamentary immunity. Ron, however, ordered two women soldiers to remove her from a bulldozer she was standing on.

Erekat said he believes the Rabin government, with this building project and other building going on in Ma'aleh Adumim, is (Continued on Page 2)

Rabin fails to end party budget rebellion

EVELYN GORDON

PRIME Minister Yitzhak Rabin yesterday agreed to extend the school day until 2 p.m. in distressed neighborhoods, but failed to end the rebellion in his party over the budget led by the most unlikely candidate: coalition chairman Eli Dayan.

Dayan and Rafi Edri (Labor) said after yesterday's coalition meeting that they will not withdraw a proposed amendment to the Economic Arrangements Law accompanying the budget, which would mandate extending the school day until 4 p.m. in development towns for the 1995/96 school year, and throughout the country the following year.

Arab MKs decide today how to vote on budget

Page 12

Dayan, usually the most obedient of faction members, insisted that the opposition, with the support of Shas and the Arab parties, had enough votes to pass an identical amendment by Meir Shevret (Likud) in any case. Therefore, it was better for Labor to pass it and get the political credit, he said.

"I consulted with legal experts—and I'm a jurist myself—and they told me that... the whole issue of faction discipline on the budget has virtually ceased to exist," he said.

"Our amendment has a majority in the Knesset... Every MK has a conscience, and we will try to convince them at the time of the vote," he said.

Most coalition MKs, however, plan to abide by the coalition decision to remove their proposed amendments, and many scored Dayan's stubbornness.

"Meretz views the behavior of the man who bears the title 'coalition chairman'... very gravely," said Meretz in a press statement.

"He is leading the rebellion against the coalition and the government, and is sabotaging... the budget's achievements in the fields of education and welfare."

The agreement on extending the school day until 2 p.m. in distressed neighborhoods came

at the end of a stormy three-hour coalition meeting, which frequently degenerated into a shouting match.

Finance Minister Avraham Shohat strongly objected to any increase in the budget.

"I will recommend that the prime minister withdraw the budget if any amendments are approved," he said. "It would be better to go to the people and say there is no budget. I am not prepared to appear with 20% inflation."

However, pressure from the MKs eventually made Rabin decide on a compromise.

"We also know how to do the calculation," said Edri, who said his bill would cost some NIS 155 million-NIS 160m. in 1995, and NIS 480m. to implement throughout the country. "But I'm also doing the political calculation. Most of the investments in education have been in wages, and they haven't caught the public's attention."

"There has to be a limit to the level of contempt for the legislature," said Economics Minister Shimon Shevret. "One man fixes the budget... and if you don't permit amendments, you take away the Knesset's only tool. This is anti-democratic. You can't rely just on the wisdom of one man."

Rabin therefore came out in favor of the 2 p.m. compromise, originally suggested by Labor MKs Yossi Vanunu, Avi Yehzekel and Emanuel Zissman. These MKs had argued that not only would this be cheaper, it would not overstrain facilities or endanger Friday classes, and it would also leave time for after-school activities, such as art or drama classes.

The proposal, which only Monday seemed to have less support than the Dayan-Edri bill, quickly garnered widespread support.

It is still not certain where money for the compromise—expected to cost some NIS 60 million—will come from. Shohat wants it to come from the Education Ministry, but Education Minister Amnon Rubinstein objects.

(Continued on Page 2)



Hundreds of people gather at the Cellcom store at Tel Aviv's Dizengoff Center yesterday for a chance to buy a less expensive cellular phone. (Hanoah Grizitzky/Israel Sun)

Hundreds descend on Cellcom for new cellular telephones

RACHEL NEIMAN

BY 9 a.m. the radio was reporting it—a crush of 201 people standing outside the new Cellcom store at Tel Aviv's Dizengoff Center.

Even earlier yesterday, at 7:30 a.m., the center's information desk noted a group of 30 waiting outside the glass doors of Cellcom, the country's second cellular phone company which opened its doors yesterday.

Benny, or No. 34, as he preferred to identify himself, said he had been standing outside since 8 a.m. It was now 10:45 a.m. and No. 15 had just entered.

"They didn't do it sensibly," he said. "First they made a list, then they handed out numbers according to the list and now we have to wait in line. That's three stages. They weren't ready, that's how it seems to me."

The low price of both the cellular phone and maintenance were what kept him in line, he said.

The company said it will charge 8.5 agorot for one minute. Cellcom has estimated that 300 min-

utes of conversation here will cost \$9 per month, as compared with \$107.60 in the UK and \$136.40 in the US.

No. 31 was a young couple—Tali and Moshe. This was their first cellular phone. "We were waiting for Cellcom," Moshe explained, annoyed the company had not shown him the same courtesy. "They might be able to sell 100 units today. They can't handle any more."

A whoop then rose up from the crowd. A plainly young man emerged through the dark blue portals. Cellcom bag aloft, and was immediately pounced upon by a waiting TV crew.

"What's happening here?" asked an American tourist as the crowd cheered another exiting phone owner and—hungry for more numbers—pushed closer to the door.

She walked off, exclaiming "Omigod" as a Cellcom representative armed with little white

cards came out and was swept into the street by the crowd.

"Stand back! Stand back!" cried the card dispenser, hemmed in by the mass of bodies. "My name is Peri!" shouted one. "I've been here all day. My name is on the list!"

A soldier and another man got into a shoving match, but cooler heads prevailed and broke up the fight.

"Inside they have girls handing out flowers," said Orna, marveling at the absurdity. "Flowers for a crowd like this." Though not yet on the list, Orna—like everyone else—was afraid to leave and risk losing her chance at a phone.

Moshe Shapira, head of security for Dizengoff Center, said his day had been very difficult.

"We gave them assistance because of the ruckus," he said, adding that he expected today to be full as well, but there would be more help.

The problem, as Shapira saw it, was Cellcom "did not give out numbers from the beginning."

'Lebanon could dismantle Hizbullah'

Barak: Peace process making it harder to catch terrorists

DAN IZENBERG

OUTGOING Chief of General Staff Lt.-Gen. Ehud Barak said yesterday that the peace process was making it more difficult for the army to catch Palestinian fugitives in Judea and Samaria.

Barak made the remarks during a farewell appearance before the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, five days before winding up a military career spanning more than 35 years, including almost four years as chief of staff.

He said the pursuit of fugitives "was more complicated, because the local inhabitants read the writing on the wall regarding the direction of the [peace] process and the weakening of the [civil] administration as a result of the transfer of powers."

The fact that fugitives can escape to Gaza and Jericho makes the work of the General Security Service more difficult, he added. "Despite that, and even though we are operating under more difficult circumstances, I am certain those still on the wanted list will be eliminated from it. The important question is what they will manage to do until then."

The chief of staff summed up the main points of his tenure, giving special emphasis to the need to continue supporting the army and providing it with appropriate funding.

"We would not be sitting at the negotiating table without a strong army," said Barak. "The Arabs would likely outmaneuver us at the table if they thought we were weak. We live in a region where there is no respect for anyone considered weak."

Regarding Lebanon, Barak said that according to army intelligence estimates, "were the Lebanese government to decide, and receive Syrian political support, it could dismantle the Hizbullah."

He added that during his term, Hizbullah policy has been to fire at Jewish settlements along the northern border only when the IDF has shelled Lebanese villages or when IDF tanks killed civilians. Barak added that the army had never struck at Lebanese civilians "for no reason or in order to make an impact on the Hizbullah."

He rejected the demands by army officers for more aggressive action in southern Lebanon. "It is good that field officers demand that we take more massive action, and it is very good that we have a chief of staff, a defense minister and a prime minister who make decisions on the basis of the complete picture," he said.

Barak said the army had effected an "important revolution" in the past few years regarding military accidents. Twenty-five soldiers have died in all types of accidents so far this year, compared with 89 in 1979, 65 in 1984 and 35 in 1989. However, there has been an increase of eight fatalities compared with last year.

He added that the army's manpower policy had concentrated on retaining the best of the regular soldiers for the professional army.

During a farewell dinner sponsored by the committee after the meeting, most of the MKs praised Barak. However, Moshe Nissim and Eliyahu Ben-Elissar (Likud) criticized the chief of staff for not blocking the appointment of IDF officers to the negotiating teams with the Palestinians.

Barak said he had only given his approval to some of the appointments.

"It's not that the general staff or the army is political," he added. "It is the issues that are political."



Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin is welcomed to Oman on Monday by Sultan Qaboos Bin Said. (Government Press Office)

Rabin hopes surprise trip to Oman will boost Arab support for peace

SARAH HONIG and news agencies

PRIME Minister Yitzhak Rabin, returning yesterday from a secret trip to Oman, said meeting with that country's leader strengthened the peace process with the entire Arab world.

Rabin flew to Oman on Monday in the first trip to a Gulf Arab country by an Israeli prime minister. He flew directly there on an air force plane, but news of the trip was not divulged until after the meeting with Sultan Qaboos.

"He invited me so that together we could give support and strength to the peace process," Rabin told reporters, when he returned before dawn yesterday.

Rabin said he wants to expand the peace beyond those countries negotiating with Israel, to include

all Arab states. He praised the courage of Qaboos for supporting the peace process.

"It is necessary to have someone who will pave the way and change worlds and concepts," Rabin said. "We are thankful for this. He did it to stress and encourage the continuation of the peace process."

Last month, Israel and Oman agreed to establish low-level relations and to set up interest offices next month.

Likud Chairman Binyamin Netanyahu revealed yesterday that the Omani foreign minister had clandestinely visited Israel in 1987 and conferred here with

then-prime minister Yitzhak Shamir.

In a statement praising the latest developments in Israeli-Omani relations, the Likud leader noted that "like the relations with Jordan, relations with Oman had been good but unofficial for years. The latest contacts with Oman remove this relationship into the light of day, thereby giving it official validity."

This is another example "of a peace which both sides genuinely want and is the sort of peace which Israel needs, in sharp contrast with the deal struck with the PLO," Netanyahu said.

Meanwhile, an alliance of 10

Palestinian rejectionist groups criticized Oman for hosting Rabin, "at a time when the Israeli policy of aggression still continues."

"This visit constitutes a dangerous step on the road of normalizing relations and surrender to the Zionist enemy," the Damascus-based alliance said in a statement.

The Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine said Rabin's visit, "highly provoked" Arab sentiment.

The Democratic Front called for an end to the "series of humiliating concessions by some Arab countries and their subjugation to Tel Aviv and Washington's dictates."

Bentsur: Reports Amman unhappy are inaccurate

DAN IZENBERG, HAIM SHAPIRO and JOSE ROSENFELD

REPORTS of Jordanian government disaffection with the consequences of the peace treaty with Israel are "inaccurate," Foreign Ministry deputy director-general Eytan Bentsur said yesterday.

Several newspapers reported yesterday that during a meeting between Bentsur and Jordanian Prime Minister Abdul-Salam Majali, Majali had said Jordan was "extremely disappointed" with the Israeli attitude towards implementation of the agreements between the two countries.

Bentsur told *The Jerusalem Post* that Majali had expressed criticism of the peace process leveled by opposition members of the Jordanian parliament.

"On the contrary," he continued, "we had the impression that King Hussein and the government are coping very well with the criticism. They expressed the hope that various processes would be speeded up but in absolutely no way did they express any complaints."

Bentsur said the meeting had been held to discuss Israel's role in projects of international cooperation.

Bentsur said Israel had offered Jordan to provide expertise in the areas of agriculture and housing.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin spoke with King Hussein for 15 minutes on the phone yesterday. Rabin's communications adviser, Benny Cohen, said he reported to Hussein on his trip to Oman. Cohen said the reports regarding Jordanian disaffection "did not come up" in the conversation.

The Israeli-Jordanian follow-up committee on the implementation of the peace treaty met in Tiberias yesterday and reaffirmed both countries' commitment to carry out the terms of the agreement on schedule. Itim reported.

Moshe Hananel, director of Galilee Tours, responded yesterday to reports of criticism from Jordan by saying that Israeli tourism had provided a shot in the arm to the Jordanian tourism industry.

Majali had been quoted as saying that Israeli tourists came for only one day and brought food with them, but Hananel said Israelis who bring their own food do so for reasons of kashrut.

"The Moslem elements in Jordan understand the problems of kashrut," Hananel said, referring to the fact that Moslems have similar restrictions.

He said that, since the peace treaty was signed, about 13,000 Israelis have visited Jordan, 7,500 with his company. Most, he said, had stayed in four- and five-star hotels. He said Jordan benefited from visa fees and entry fees to Petra, and that hotels, bus companies, and souvenir shops have also benefited, especially during the present slack season.

However, Ziv Spector, director of Tzel Midbar, a desert tour company which wants to set up a desert tour center with a Jordanian company, said the influx of Israeli tourists has resulted in problems for the Jordanians. Spector is about to leave for talks with Osman Masri, director of Wadi Tours in Jordan.

Spector said the wave of Israeli tourists has swamped the relatively limited Jordanian infrastructure and resulted in wild competition among Jordanian tour companies, which have slashed their profit margins in an effort to attract Israelis.

"They would like to see a better class of Israeli tourists spread out over the next five years or so, stabbing."

Meretz's Shulamit Aloni said, "The entire notion of a ministry for domestic propaganda was reprehensible and should not have come into the world in the first place. News of its early death is good news. Shalom knows what would have happened had this bad idea been put to a vote in the Knesset, and he was wise to escape defeat."

BUDGET

(Continued from Page 1)

As part of the compromise, the Finance and Education ministries will also consider extending the school day until 4:00 in development towns, and will reach a decision by the end of June.

Afterwards, Shohat expressed satisfaction at the compromise, which he termed "balanced and correct."

Meanwhile, the debate on the Economic Arrangements Law - which includes the long school day amendment - continued in the plenum yesterday. Voting will take place sometime today, and the debate and vote on the budget will take place tomorrow.

Jose Rosenfeld adds:

Bank of Israel Governor Jacob Frenkel came out squarely against attempts by Knesset members to load next year's budget with projects which, he warned, would overrun budget limits.

Frenkel added that even if particular new programs are justified, they should not be added, unless cuts corresponding their costs are proposed. He emphasized that public spending included in next year's budget is already higher than desired, limiting the size of tax cuts necessary to bring down an excessively high tax burden.

EFRAT

(Continued from Page 1)

El Khader residents vowed to return to the site today to continue their protest.

But Efrat local council head Yimon Ahiman assured the Gush Etzion gathering last night that, "The government has given us permission to build, and we will fight so the building does not stop."

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Shahal

(Continued from Page 1)

him to reconsider, stressing he had made the offer and Shahal had not sought it.

In his letter, Shahal wrote that he had made his decision "following appeals from the public and in view of my realization that my accepting this portfolio might actually harm the government's image."

To avoid any injury to the government, Shahal wrote, he decided "to make this sacrifice." Shahal

thanked Rabin for offering him the new portfolio and for including him on the ministerial negotiations committee.

But he had harsh words for his opponents. The Labor ministers who rushed to Rabin and registered their opposition are "cowards," Shahal said, because "They have no courage to make their statements openly, face to face. Their talent lies in saying things behind the back."

MK Hagai Merom and other Labor MKs who urged him to reject the new appointment and

threatened to vote against it in the Knesset are "hypocrites. They have made hypocrisy an art," Shahal charged.

Tourism Minister Uzi Baram, who fought Shahal's appointment, reacted to his onslaught by reminding him that "Those who live in glass houses shouldn't throw stones. Shahal is the last one who should be speaking about hypocrisy and back-

stabbing."

Meretz's Shulamit Aloni said, "The entire notion of a ministry for domestic propaganda was reprehensible and should not have come into the world in the first place. News of its early death is good news. Shalom knows what would have happened had this bad idea been put to a vote in the Knesset, and he was wise to escape defeat."

SOCIAL & PERSONAL

The weekly meeting of the English-speaking Jerusalem Rotary Club will take place today at 1 p.m. at the YMCA, King David Street. Mr. Ari Rath, former editor of *The Jerusalem Post*, will address the club.

Winning numbers & cards

In last night's weekly Lotto drawing, the winning numbers were 9, 11, 17, 18, 28, 38 and the additional number was 15. In yesterday's Mifal Hapais daily Chance card draw, the lucky cards were: queen of spades, king of hearts, king of diamonds, and ace of clubs.

SHAHAL

(Continued from Page 1)

him to reconsider, stressing he had made the offer and Shahal had not sought it.

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THE KNESSET

Tomorrow, Thursday, December 29, there will be no tours of the Knesset building as the debate on the budget will be continuing, at that time.

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مكتبة الكمال

Liba'i calls for Arab judge on Supreme Court

THE time has come for an Israeli Arab judge to sit on the Supreme Court bench, Justice Minister David Liba'i said yesterday.

He was speaking to reporters before the ceremony at Beit Hanassi where 18 new judges were sworn in before President Ezer Weizman. Two of the new judges are Arabs and 10 are women.

"Together with Chief Justice

Meir Shamgar, we are doing everything possible to include more and more Moslem, Christian and Druze judges in the judiciary system at all levels, to stress that this is a system in which all our citizens share a fair part without differences of sex, ethnic group or religion," Liba'i added.

Weizman welcomed a visiting group of Supreme Court justices

BATSHEVA TSUR

from China who attended the ceremony. "We are proud and delighted that full diplomatic relations have been established between our two countries," the president told the visitors.

Weizman also brought up the question of pardons for persons serving life-sentences for murder.

He stressed that it should not be left for the president to commute such sentences, but rather that the law should be amended so judges would have the discretion not to impose the current mandatory life-sentence for murder.

New courtrooms will be built next year in Nazareth, Beersheba and Eilat, following years of neglect of the courthouses through-

out the country, Liba'i announced. He said the new courthouse in Acre would soon be opened to the public and existing courts would be overhauled. He added steps would be taken to speed up the pace of hearings and to increase the authority of magistrate's courts so they could hear financial claims of up to NIS 1 million.

Suspect arrested in first Haifa homosexual murder

DAVID RUDGE

POLICE yesterday arrested a 33-year-old resident of Ashdod on suspicion of murdering Technion Prof. Yeshayahu Demner at the latter's home in Haifa two months ago.

The suspect, who reportedly has a criminal record, was arrested at his home in Ashdod by homicide detectives from Haifa. Police said he was refusing to cooperate with investigators.

Nevertheless, senior police sources said they were convinced that the murder had been solved.

The naked body of Demner, 46, a homosexual who was an AIDS carrier, was found at his home in Haifa's Kiryat Eliezer district at the end of October after work colleagues reported his absence. He had been stabbed to death.

Demner had reportedly invited men to his home and paid them to have sex on condition they did not use condoms, even though he was aware he was an AIDS carrier.

Police advised anyone who been in contact with the Technion lecturer to undergo an AIDS test.

The murder of another homosexual, Eliezer Levi, 52, a clinical psychologist, at his home in the city's Carmel district last week, raised fears that a serial killer might be operating among the homosexual community in Haifa.

Haifa district police spokesman Supt. Shoshani Markovitch stressed, however, that there was no connection between the two cases.

"It is crystal clear that there are no links whatsoever between the murder of Demner and that of Eliezer Levi," he said.

He said that the suspect in the Demner murder was traced through evidence found in the victim's home.

The suspect in Demner's murder is to be brought before the Haifa Magistrate's Court this morning for a remand hearing.

Eilat, Akaba to get desalination plants

DAVID RUDGE

A DESALINATION plant to meet Eilat's growing need for drinking water is among the major new projects Mekorot, the national water company, intends to carry out in 1995.

Mekorot spokesman Yael Shoham said the plant in Eilat, where a pilot scheme is already in operation, would be followed by a much bigger desalination project - to supply fresh water from the gulf to both Eilat and Jordan's Akaba, in association with a Japanese company.

Details were outlined at a press conference in Tel Aviv yesterday by Mekorot chairman Sar-Shalom Shiran and acting director-general Ovadia Ela.

They announced Mekorot's 1995 budget would top NIS 1.6 billion, of which NIS 600 million are destined for development projects. Shiran noted the development budget is double this year's, saying this had been made possible by reforms enabling Mekorot to raise money on the capital market.

Other development projects include building a plant on the northern shore of Lake Kinneret to desalinate water from three briny springs. This water is to be used to boost Jordan's water resources under the peace treaty.

Some of the budget is to be used to renovate pumping equipment at the Sapir site of the National Water Carrier, in conjunction with an American firm, as well as to supply more recycled water for agriculture and to improve some urban water networks.

Rafiah man held in stabbing death of Ashdod prostitute

RAINE MARCUS

ASHDOD police say they have solved the murder of a prostitute who was found stabbed to death in her apartment in the city three months ago.

Yesterday the publication ban on details of the case was lifted.

A Rafiah resident, Iman Abdallah, 26, was arrested by the GSS two weeks ago in connection with the slaying of 34-year-old Natasha Ivanov.

Abdallah was apprehended as he tried to enter Israel using a false identity card. He was also wanted for the attempted murder of building contractor Ezra Reuven.

Police alleged that several hours after he stabbed Ivanov to death, Abdallah slashed Reuven's throat after an argument over money, before fleeing to Gaza.

The following day, police received an anonymous phone call. "I killed that whore Natasha at her home," said the caller, giving the exact address.

Police found Ivanov's body rolled up in a rug.

Abdallah has already reenacted the murder for police cameras and said he murdered her because she refused to have sex with him.



Police escort director Assi Dayan to hospital yesterday after he was ordered to undergo psychiatric observation. Dayan allegedly had sprayed policemen with a caustic liquid after threatening suicide.

Assi Dayan hospitalized by district psychiatrist

RAINE MARCUS

FILM director, actor, and writer Assi Dayan, 50, was ordered hospitalized for psychiatric observation yesterday after police said he sprayed acid in their faces when they tried to talk him out of committing suicide.

The incident began at 7 a.m., when Dayan's girlfriend phoned police and his psychiatrist for help, saying he sounded confused and she feared he might take his own life.

Two patrolmen arrived at Dayan's Ramat Gan apartment, where they tried to coax him to open the door. After a while Da-

yan, the son of Moshe Dayan and brother of MK Yael Dayan, opened the door and allegedly sprayed acid in their faces.

The policemen were taken to Sheba Hospital at nearby Tel Hashomer, where they were treated and released.

Meanwhile, the district psychiatrist, Dayan's psychiatrist, and other members of a negotiating team arrived at the apartment to talk with him. After three hours of discussion, Dayan was taken to a mental hospital after the district

psychiatrist issued a compulsory hospitalization order.

In a phone interview to Army Radio, Dayan denied he had threatened to kill himself.

"I was putting on an act," he said, slurring his words. "I had been filming for 36 hours non-stop and had no sleep."

The talented Dayan, who has a history of psychiatric disturbances following drug abuse, was escorted away by three policemen.

"Everything's fine," he said as

he was led away. "But it's a great honor that you all came here."

At this stage, police said, they will not press charges.

"One should feel sorry for him," said a senior officer. "The guy is probably a genius, but flips out now and again. How can we prosecute a mentally disturbed person? The police are not looking for revenge."

A friend of Dayan's, Tel Aviv pub owner Zohara Avitsedeck, told reporters the director's life had been threatened recently and the police have not done enough to protect him.

Ministry reconsiders sanctions for Soroka

JUDY SIEGEL

HEALTH Ministry director-general Prof. Mordechai Shani has decided to reconsider his previous decision to punish Soroka Hospital for not properly supervising a medical resident accused of falsifying his operating records.

The Jerusalem Post has learned that Shani sent a letter to the department heads and the Israel Medical Association (IMA) last week in which he says he "has reached the conclusion that there is a need for an additional discussion in which hospital representatives will participate."

Shani added that he was forced to rule prematurely on the issue "because of pressure by health reporters for comments."

A few weeks ago, Shani said he would implement recommendations by the IMA's scientific council to punish a Soroka Hospital resident for falsifying records of his participation in operations. The director-general said he would name an outside physician to supervise Soroka's residency program and bar five department heads from accepting new residents for one to five years.

The severe punishment followed the anonymous leak of information to the council about Dr. Aharon Amir, a plastic-surgery resident at the Beersheba hospital. According to the complaint, Amir did not participate in many of the operations he claimed to have attended, and the five department heads signed his attendance statements without checking.

Shani said then the cheating at Soroka was "unprecedented," and that he "had no choice" but to implement the scientific council's recommendations because they were "binding."

But yesterday, ministry spokeswoman Yifat Ben-Hai confirmed that Shani was reconsidering the matter.

Supplementary health insurance: A guide to the perplexed

JUDY SIEGEL

STARTING Sunday, all supplementary health insurance plans offered by the health funds will be frozen, with no changes allowed unless approved by Health Minister Ephraim Sneh.

Existing plans will be in effect only until the last day of 1995, the ministry announced last night.

During 1995, no one will be allowed to join supplementary health insurance plans that were in effect before Sunday, when the national health insurance system is launched, unless they are new plans that have been approved by the minister.

The ministry said that any health fund member may join his or her fund's new supplementary health insurance scheme; the insurers may not disqualify members who were not part of the previous scheme or who discontinued membership.

However, those who weren't previously part of their fund's supplementary scheme can be put off for one year before receiving benefits. This is to prevent them from joining the scheme suddenly when they learn of a serious medical condition that demands extra treatment, the ministry said. It is not clear whether such members will be required to pay fees for the scheme during the one-year wait.

Those who were members of a supplementary scheme before the beginning of the new health insurance system will be exempt from the one-year wait.

Supplementary health insurance plans may include only those services that are not included in the basic basket of health services covered by the national health insurance system. The permissible services for which insurers may charge extra include more comfortable conditions in hospitals and shorter waiting times for treatment in a private hospital.

The supplementary schemes will not allow patients the right to choose the doctor who will treat them. The schemes will also not provide a diagnostic method or treatment available in the basket of services, or shorten waiting times for services or drugs included in the basic basket, such as treatment in a public hospital.

The ministry said it has sent these guidelines to the health funds. No comment was available last night from the funds, however.

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MKs seek government funds for Laniado

JUDY SIEGEL

A JOINT committee of the Knesset Labor and Social Affairs and Finance committees yesterday called on the government to accede to Laniado Hospital's requests for state funds to prevent its closing next week.

The Netanyahu Hospital has a NIS 12 million deficit because of government-approved wage increases and the Netanyahu Municipality's reduction of aid.

A representative of Netanyahu Mayor Zvi Polg said he valued the hospital greatly, but the financially strapped municipality could no longer give NIS 5 million in subsidies. That was the responsibility of the Health and Finance ministries, he said.

No comment was available last night from Health Ministry spokeswoman Yifat Ben-Hai.

Meanwhile, Knesset Labor and Social Affairs Committee chairman MK Yossi Katz said yesterday that the committee would "not automatically approve" every agreement between the Health and Finance ministries over the size of the "basket of health services" to be available to all residents under the national health insurance system.

R.E.M. to perform here in August

RUTH KERN and DAVID BRINN

"NEXT time, bring your guitars" snapped a headline in the Hebrew press back in 1992, when two members of the hugely popular American rock quartet R.E.M. came here on a brief, non-playing promotional tour.

Three years later, they are doing just that.

The group will give one concert here on August 3, as part of the international tour supporting their latest album *Monster*. It has been announced. It is their first tour

in five years. The venue has yet to be determined.

Hailing from Athens, Georgia, the group has been a mainstay of college radio station play-lists since it launched the post-punk movement in 1979. The 1992 album *Automatic for the People* thrust it firmly into mainstream superstardom.

The music of Michael Stipe (vocals), Peter Buck (guitar),

Mike Mills (bass/organ) and Bill Berry (drums) is somewhat reminiscent of the folk-based rock of such Sixties groups as The Byrds.

While their earlier albums relied on the punk energy of influences like Patti Smith and The Velvet Underground, their later, more successful albums have chosen a varied, more subdued approach. *Monster*, however, has returned the band to their rock & roll roots, with a loud guitar-oriented sound that is both brash and thoughtful.



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Four priests murdered in Algeria

PARIS (Reuters) - Four Roman Catholic priests, three French and one Belgian, were murdered in Algeria yesterday, less than 24 hours after commandos killed four Moslem guerrillas who hijacked a French airliner, French officials said.

The official Algerian news agency APS said the four were killed by Islamic fundamentalist guerrillas in their presbytery in Tizi-Ouzou, 110 kilometers east of the capital Algiers.

Algerian security forces immediately launched a search for the "terrorist group," a term used by authorities for Islamic rebels, APS said.

In Rome, the priests' order, the White Fathers, said they were trying to find out exactly what happened.

The killings brought to 76 the number of foreigners killed in Algeria since the Islamic Armed Group (GIA), which has claimed responsibility for the hijacking, ordered all foreigners more than a year ago to leave or face death. Twenty-six of those killed were French.

APS named the French priests as Jean-Marie Chevillard, 69, Alain Dieulouard, 75, and Christian

Chessel, 36. It said the Belgian was Charles Deckers, 70.

The GIA hijackers of the French airliner killed three passengers on the plane - a Frenchman, a Vietnamese and an Algerian - during the 54-hour Christmas drama.

No group immediately claimed responsibility for killing the four priests, but the murders could be tit-for-tat revenge for the French police killing of the four hijackers at Marseille airport. GIA guerrillas have killed European clerics before.

The foreign ministry said in a statement French authorities were "deeply shocked and overwhelmed and condemned the odious crime with the utmost severity."

It reiterated an appeal to French nationals to leave Algeria and said the French embassy had told Algerian authorities of France's "most serious concern."

Foreign Minister Alain Juppé said after the hijacking ended that the bloody conflict between Moslem rebels and the Algerian government was likely to bring more violence against French interests.

Hijackers planned suicide mission over Paris

MARSEILLE (AP) - The French government feared Islamic terrorists would blow up a hijacked Air France passenger jet in the skies over Paris in a suicide operation, Interior Minister Charles Pasqua said yesterday.

"We learned of it notably by an anonymous call received at the French Consulate in Oran," Pasqua said of the northwest Algerian port city.

The hostage takers were obviously not concerned about their lives or those of the passengers," Pasqua said, a day after French commandos freed 171 hostages aboard the jetliner that had been commandeered in Algiers on Christmas Eve.

The Islamic radicals who hijacked the plane were overheard saying they planned to blow the jetliner up in mid-flight over Paris, passengers held hostage aboard the plane said yesterday.

Their revelations came the same day investigators discovered two caches of dynamite rigged with detonators hidden

under two seats in the aircraft, which was stormed by French commandos Monday in an assault that killed all four hijackers.

"They demanded 27 tons of kerosene to fly to Paris, which wasn't necessary," passenger Ferhat Mehenni told the television network TF-1.

Only 10 tons of kerosene is necessary to make the trip to Paris, regional Prefect (governor) Hubert Blanc said Monday.

The extra kerosene, which jets use as fuel, would have caused a bigger fire if the plane did indeed crash.

"Their idea was to set Paris ablaze," said Mehenni, a well-known singer in Algeria. "They whispered it among themselves, and passengers overheard them."

Another unidentified passenger told the network that "They said they wanted the kerosene to fly to Paris and blow the plane up either over Orly (Airport) or over Paris."

Some 20 sticks of dynamite connected to detonators were found under a seat just behind the Airbus A300's cockpit and under another seat in wide-body jet's midsection, Marseille Police Chief Alain Gehin said.

He said he never heard the hijackers express "the intention of transforming the plane into a flying bomb" and detonating the explosives while in flight.

"But throughout our dialogue, it was understood that I could not take the risk of allowing a plane to take off that could be susceptible to being blown up in the air," Gehin said.

It was not clear whether French authorities were aware of the hijackers' alleged plans to blow up the plane, but Gehin's acknowledgment that he would not allow the plane to leave could explain the timing of the assault on the plane at Marseille's airport.

Monday's commando rescuers were lauded as national heroes, and President Francois Mitterrand expressed "the nation's gratitude."

Yeltsin addresses nation, urges troops to press on

DAVID LJUNGREN
MOSCOW

IN his first public appearance since Russian troops entered Chechnya, President Boris Yeltsin told the Russian armed forces yesterday to press on and finish the job of disarming rebel forces in Chechnya, saying the breakaway region posed a huge threat to Russia's stability.

But Yeltsin, speaking in a nationwide television address, softened his headline message by saying he had ordered a halt to air raids that could cause civilian casualties.

The deaths of dozens of civilians in air raids on the Chechen capital Grozny have prompted international concern.

A senior defense ministry official told Interfax news agency that once the weather improved the air force planned to use high-precision laser-guided bombs against military targets.

"The use of high-precision weapons means we can virtually exclude the chance of causing civilian casualties," he said.

The bombs were so accurate that they could be planted within two to three meters of the target, he added.

Yeltsin said he had ordered a halt on "bombing raids which can lead to casualties among the civilian population of Grozny."

The Kremlin leader said he had sent thousands of troops and hundreds of armored vehicles into the North Caucasus territory to ensure the future of the entire Russian Federation and would not end their mission until order had been restored.

He emphatically ruled out any question that the mainly-Moslem territory would be allowed to break away.

"The longer the situation in the Chechen republic goes on, the greater the destructive effect on Russia's stability. It has become one of the main internal threats to our state's stability," Yeltsin said.



Jordanian children of Chechen descent stage a demonstration at the UN office in Amman yesterday, condemning Russia's invasion of the Chechen Republic. (AP)

The Kremlin sent troops and tanks into Chechnya on December 11 to disarm forces loyal to separatist leader Dzhokhar Dudayev, who declared independence in October 1991.

"I call on you to do everything you can to fulfill this task and I believe you will do so," Yeltsin said, directly addressing the armed forces. Armed bands who resisted would be crushed.

"Remember that the explosion of banditry on Chechen soil threatens our entire country," he said.

Your kin could be among its victims," he said.

"I want to assure all Russians - do not worry. Order and peace will be restored to Chechnya. We will take measures to avoid dragging out a solution of this complicated problem."

Yeltsin, 63, spoke distinctly during his 20 minute speech and showed no signs of after-effects from a nose operation which kept him in a Kremlin clinic for most of the early phase of the Chechen conflict. (Reuters)

N. Korea holds pilot until US apologizes for 'espionage'

SEOUL (AP) - A letter of regret wasn't enough. North Korea said yesterday that US officials must apologize for a "deliberate act of espionage" - the intrusion of an American helicopter into its airspace.

US officials again denied spying. The State Department sent Thomas Hubbard to seek the release of US pilot Bobby Hall, whose prospects for immediate freedom plummeted.

The statement by Pyongyang's official Korean Central News Agency was only its third mention of the December 17 incident in which the US Army OH-58C helicopter strayed across the Demilitarized Zone and crashed or was shot down.

Hall was captured and fellow Chief Warrant Officer David Hilemon died. Hilemon's body was returned last Thursday as part of a deal worked out by US Rep. Bill Richardson, who said it called for Hall to be freed "very soon."

The rhetoric-filled statement came as there appeared to be progress in obtaining Hall's release and raised questions at the sudden turnaround.

Does the North really want an apology and an admission of spying, or is this an effort to obtain concessions from the United States?

More ominously, is it a sign that military hard-liners are in control of the reclusive communist country, and not Kim Jong Il, the

designated heir of his father, longtime leader Kim Il Sung, who died July 8?

"There's a split between the Foreign Ministry, the civilian side that I think wants to resolve this issue, and the military, which unfortunately doesn't want to resolve this issue and is upping the ante and is most recalcitrant in dealing with the United States," Richardson said on American television yesterday.

On NBC's "Today" show, Richardson said he was very disappointed, "but I think it's important to stay cool. Nothing is final with them."

Rep. Lee Hamilton, outgoing chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, agreed.

"Let's keep cool here, let's proceed with our diplomacy, let's make clear what happened and what did not happen, but let's be very insistent, very insistent, that that airman must be returned," he said on the same program.

Referring to US promises in a nuclear agreement with North Korea, including provision of some \$5 million worth of fuel to the North, Hamilton added: "It's difficult for me to see the Congress doing that unless this airman is returned."

The North Korean news agency declared that all facts prove the helicopter's intrusion was "a deliberate act of espionage. In view of the seriousness of the incident, we cannot but

investigate the truth of the incident more deeply."

The North has said Hall will not be released until it completes its investigation. South Korea's Hankyoreh Shinmun, which is strong on North Korean news, reported that the investigation is being held up by Hall's refusal to cooperate.

"If Warrant Officer Hall does not tell the truth and continues to be uncooperative, the investigation will take a considerably long time," the newspaper quoted a senior North Korean diplomat at the United Nations as saying.

The North's official statement said Washington "must admit its responsibility... and clearly show an honest and reasonable attitude before it is too late."

US officials sent Pyongyang a letter of regret over the weekend. They were surprised by the statement's tone but noted North Korea is known for high-voltage rhetoric, sometimes even amid diplomatic breakthroughs.

Korean News Service, a pro-North Korean news agency in Tokyo, released a photograph Tuesday obtained from the North Korean government that the agency said showed Hall after the chopper went down, standing in a flight suit with his arms in the air. The agency also released a photo it said showed the helicopter's wreckage.

Extra jail privileges for O.J. upsets lawyers of other inmates

LOS ANGELES (AP) - O.J. Simpson is getting special treatment that most inmates at the jail can only dream of, including daily showers and all the weekend visitors he wants, the Los Angeles Times reported Monday.

The privileges at Los Angeles County's Men's Central Jail have upset some public defenders whose clients are poor and typically get little slack from the system.

Most "keep-away" inmates - those like Simpson who are held in isolation - get only one hour per week in the crowded visiting room. Simpson gets unlimited, albeit no-contact visits with girlfriend Paula Barbieri and others in a private booth in a room reserved for inmates meeting with their lawyers, the newspaper said.

Simpson has exclusive use of the attorney visiting area on weekends and was allowed visitors on Christmas, the newspaper said. The jail's 6,000 other inmates weren't allowed Christmas visitors, the newspaper said.

Simpson is allowed to sleep later and make use of about 14 hours outside his cell each week to stretch his legs, ride an exercise bike provided for his use, talk on the phone or watch TV, the newspaper said, citing records and interviews. Most inmates get up to four hours outside their cells each week, the newspaper said.

Simpson can also take a shower with the extra time out of his cell, said Deputy George Ducoulombier, a sheriff's spokesman. Other "keep-away" inmates shower every other day, the Times said.

Simpson won a court order guaranteeing him a hot meal if he gets back from court after dinner is served. Other inmates who miss the hot meal get cold sandwiches, the Times said.

"If our clients made that complaint, the sheriff would... tell them to shut up," said a public defender, Russell Griffith.

Robert Shapiro, one of Simpson's lawyers, said Simpson needs to be treated differently because of the complexity of his case.

"I keep hearing this bull--- of 'special treatment, special treatment, special treatment,'" Shapiro said. "The whole place sucks."

Simpson is the only prisoner in a seven-cell wing of a jail unit, but he is still subject to other jail rules. Ducoulombier said Simpson lost his privileges for three days after guards discovered contraband - a yellow highlighting pen used to mark documents - in his cell.

Simpson's lawyers submitted a list of 52 material witnesses for Simpson's trial. These are people who might be called upon to testify about his character and must confer with the defendant extensively, Shapiro said.

Police in US worried about new deadly plastic bullets

NEW YORK (AP) - Two new hyper-destructive handgun bullets - one designed to do maximum damage to human tissue, a second that can penetrate body armor - are about to go on sale in the US, despite the angry objections of police and gun control advocates.

The inventor, a research chemist making his first venture in ammunition, defends Rhino-Ammo, the flesh-ripping bullet, as "a strictly defensive round" for citizens protecting themselves against attackers and intruders.

"The beauty behind it is that it makes an incredible wound," says David Keen, chief executive of Signature Products Corp. in Huntsville, Ala. "That makes the target stop and worry about survival instead of robbing or murdering you."

What makes police stop and worry is the concern that criminals will get hold of the armor-piercing rounds, which make officers' bulletproof vests worthless. "Once they're on the market, they're out. They can get into the wrong hands," says Beth McGee of the National Association of Police Organizations.

"What if an antitank round falls into the wrong hands?" Keen retorts. "I cannot promise anyone this round won't fall into the wrong hands. I can assure you we will sell only to the right people."

In response to an AP story,

Rep. Charles Schumer (D-NY), said yesterday that he would introduce legislation in Congress banning any bullet that can penetrate bullet-proof vests.

The packaging for Rhino-Ammo claims the bullet breaks into thousands of razor-like fragments when it strikes human flesh.

"Each of these fragments becomes lethal shrapnel and is hurled into vital organs, lungs, circulatory system components, the heart and other tissues. The wound channel is catastrophic... Death is nearly instantaneous."

The Black Rhino version has a convex point designed to penetrate bullet-stopping material such as Kevlar. Once it reaches soft flesh, Keen says, it is as destructive as Rhino-Ammo. According to its package, "Nothing stops a charging Rhino!"

Signature Products originally made coatings for radar-evading stealth aircraft. But when the Cold War ended and defense contracts dropped off, Keen needed new markets for his technology.

"When [Rhino-Ammo] hits somebody, they're going to die," Keen says. "It causes a horrific wound. That's not by accident. It's engineered by design. The round disintegrates as it hits. There's no way to stop the bleeding."

"I don't care where it hits. They're going down for good."

PIA - PRIME MUTUAL FUND OPEN FUND

Notice regarding the publication of a Prospectus

Offering of Units to Foreign Residents Only

According to section 31 (b) (2) of the Joint Investment Trusts Law, 5754-1994 (referred to in the Prospectus as "the Law") notice is hereby given that a prospectus has been published containing an offer to the public of an unlimited number of registered Fund units of a nominal value of one U.S. dollar (hereinafter "dollar") each, but no less than 100 units in a single purchase, offered at the unit price fixed from time to time with the addition of 1% or less as detailed in Chapter A of the Prospectus.

The above units are being offered from 28.12.1994 until 27.12.1995 and will be sold, subject as mentioned in paragraphs 4 and 5 of Chapter A of the Prospectus, on those days on which trading takes place both in Israel and abroad, as defined in paragraph 1(a) of Chapter A of the Prospectus. Payment for the units shall be made only in dollars out of a non-resident foreign currency deposit account of a foreign resident.

The Fund's Investment Policy (see chapter F of the Prospectus)

- The Fund Agreement provides that:
 - At least 30% of the Fund assets will be bonds and loans of any class.
 - The provisions of subclause (a) may be varied by amending the Fund Agreement without requiring the sanction of the unit holders in general meeting.
- Unless otherwise resolved by the Board of Directors of the Fund Manager, at least 50% of the assets of the Fund will be bonds and loans of any class.
- The Fund Manager may purchase for the Fund foreign securities and options traded abroad (in this Prospectus: "foreign options") to an extent not exceeding 75% of the fund assets less liabilities (in this Prospectus: "the net value of the Fund assets"), provided the investment in options does not exceed the rate mentioned in paragraph 4 below. The Fund Manager is also entitled, subject to the provisions of the Foreign Exchange Permit, 5738-1978, to hold, for the Fund, cash in foreign currency at a rate not exceeding 45% of the net value of the Fund assets provided the cash amount in foreign currency, together with the foreign securities which the Fund Manager is entitled to purchase, shall not exceed 90% of the net value of the Fund assets. The Fund Manager does not undertake to invest a specific rate of the Fund assets in foreign securities.
- According to the provisions of the law, as set out in paragraph 3(f) of Chapter F of the Prospectus, the aggregate value of CALL and PUT Options held by the Fund, apart from Mat (CALL 1 Options) Options, is not to exceed 10% of the aggregate amount of the Fund assets. Details concerning the nature of the options and the risks attached to options and investing therein, are set out in paragraph 1 (c) of Chapter F of the Prospectus.
- According to sections 63 and 64 of the Law, the Minister of Finance is entitled to prescribe in regulations, the conditions on which the following transactions will be carried out by the Fund Manager for the Fund under its management:
 - Purchase, sale and writing of options and futures contracts.
 - Effecting a sale short.
 - Lending or signing a lending agreement of securities, for the purpose of a sale transaction effected "short" provided this is not for any other fund being managed by it.

The Fund Manager may carry out transactions as above, subject to the provisions of law and the Fund Agreement.

Principal Investments of the Fund from the date of the operation thereof on 29 December 1993 through 30 September 1994

The mean of the principal investments of the Fund (according to the rates held at the end of each month) during the period from 29 December 1993 (being the date of operation of the Fund) through 30 September 1994 was as follows:

	In % of the aggregate Fund assets
Bonds traded abroad	58
Shares traded abroad	6
Shares traded in Israel	4
Cash in foreign currency	25

Data regarding changes in the redemption price of Fund units compared to changes in various indices:

	Increase/reduction rate during the period: 29.12.93 (date of operation of Fund) - 30.9.94 in %
Redemption price of the Fund units as published in the Stock Exchange list of rates:	
In dollar terms	-4.10
In terms of Israeli currency	-3.38
Consumer Price Index (according to the Index in respect of the last month for the entire period)	10.53
Representative rate of exchange of the U.S. dollar	0.97

Activity of and Investments for the Fund

The Fund Agreement provides that the Trust Manager may, without the sanction of the unit holders in general meeting:

- Effect any act and make any investments for the Fund as will be permitted by law.
- Subject to the provisions of the law, write options for the Fund.

Validity of Permit of the Controller of Foreign Currency for operating the Fund

The validity of the Permit of the Foreign Currency Controller for operating the Fund, (appearing in Appendix D to this Prospectus) will expire on 31.12.95 unless extended prior to its expiration.

"Unrestricted Fund"

The Fund is an "unrestricted fund". Details of the tax provisions applicable to unrestricted funds are set out in section 2 and 5 of Chapter O of the Prospectus, under the heading "Taxation".

Annual Fees of Fund Manager and Trustee (see Chapter J of this Prospectus)

Under the Fund Agreement, the Fund Manager is entitled to receive an annual fee equivalent to 4% of the average annual value of the Fund's total assets less liabilities. Unless otherwise decided by the Fund Manager, it will receive an annual fee equal to 1.5% of the aforementioned value.

The Trustee is entitled, under the Fund Agreement, to receive, and will receive, an annual fee equal to 0.2% of the aforementioned value.

English Translation

The Hebrew text of the Fund Agreement, certifications of participation in the Fund and the Prospectus, is the only binding text. The translator of the Prospectus has certified the English translation of the Prospectus to be a true translation of the Hebrew (The certification is annexed as Annexure "G" of the Prospectus).

In this Prospectus: "Foreign Resident" is as defined in the Currency Control Law 5738 - 1978, and in the Currency Control Permit 5736 - 1978 as set out in Appendix C hereof. Under the Currency Control Permit mentioned above (section: Validity of Permit of Controller of Foreign Currency for operating the Fund), Israeli residents (including holders of an exemption) are not entitled to acquire units of this fund.

Submission of Applications

Applications for the purchase of the units offered, are to be lodged with Bank Leumi Le-Israel B.M. and to other members of the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange (hereinafter, "TASE") and will be forwarded to the Fund Manager through the TASE clearing house. A copy of the Prospectus and of the Securities Authority's permit for the publication thereof will be filed with the Registrar of Companies and the TASE no later than the first business day following the Prospectus date.

Copies of the Prospectus may be obtained at all branches of Bank Leumi Le-Israel B.M. and from the other members of the TASE.

A member of the TASE will be liable towards, and required to effect payment to the Fund Manager, through the TASE clearing house, of the entire proceeds becoming due in respect of units sold in respect of the applications lodged by it.

Fund Manager "Leumi-Pia" Trust Management Company LTD.

The Trustee: Kesselman & Kesselman Trust Co. (1971) Ltd.

Tel Aviv: 25 Taveth, 5755
28 December, 1994

MUTUAL FUNDS
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مركز التمويل

Omani women to 'roll up sleeves'

News agencies
MUSCAT

SULTAN Qaboos underscored the role of women in building society and said such a role was prescribed by Islam as he inaugurated the annual session of the Majlis al-Shura, or consultative assembly, this week.

"We call upon Omani women everywhere, in the villages and the cities, in both urban and Bedouin communities, in the hills and mountains, to roll up their sleeves and contribute to the process of economic and social development," the sultan said.

For the first time in the modern history of the sultanate and its neighboring conservative Islamic monarchies on the Arabian Peninsula, there are now two women seated among the 80 members selected by the sultan to sit in the Majlis.

Even in Kuwait, which has the only elected parliament among the six monarchies, women still are completely banned from political life.

The two women - Shikour bint Mohammed bin Salim al-Ghamari and Taiba bint Mohammed bin Rashid al-Mawali - were selected from the province of the capital Muscat, one of 59 provinces that make up the small sultanate.

Qaboos pledged in his address that this would gradually be extended in accordance with circumstances to other of the country's provinces.

"The bases of women's candidacy will be the same as those for men, which are the trust of the people and the people's choice of their representatives in the Majlis," he said. "This will not be an

honor confined to women alone, but to the whole community, and will be a correction of some wrong understanding which belittles the status that Islam accords to women."

Women and men, said the sultan, "are companions." Prophet Mohammed "instructed us as to the role of women. This role was very significant in the early period of Islam."

Sultan Qaboos has pledged to combat any extremism in the name of the Islamic faith, following the cracking of a fundamentalist group charged with agitation earlier this year. He also has called upon scholars properly to interpret their faith for the benefit of the masses of the 20th century.

Consultative assemblies first appeared in the early days of Islam as groupings of tribal and religious elders who helped advise rulers.

Oman and the other Gulf monarchies, with the exception of Kuwait, each have these appointed assemblies.

Oman's leader has always pursued an independent foreign policy in the Gulf. A clear sign of this was the visit this week to the sultanate of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin.

While relations with Israel have been warming - Deputy Foreign Minister Yossi Beilin has visited Oman twice this year - Qaboos adheres to the Gulf Cooperation Council's policy that full relations with Israel are not possible until a comprehensive Arab-Israeli peace is effectively in place.

Saudi Arabia's economy faces problems

DOUGLAS DAVIS
and news agencies

SAUDI Arabia will face serious financial instability unless the royal household takes drastic action to confront deepening economic malaise, according to an unpublished, confidential report by the International Monetary Fund.

The 27-page report was drawn up by a team of IMF economists who visited the kingdom last summer and was recently approved by the IMF's executive board.

The report says the Saudi economy is weak and showing no signs of improvement, despite the recent modest increase in international oil prices and government efforts to balance the budget.

Far from achieving its goal of a balanced budget, Saudi Arabia is expected to register a deficit of \$6.6 billion in 1995, despite having one-quarter of the world's proven oil reserves. The situation is unlikely to change in the next four years, notes the report, unless drastic action is taken.

If the government does not confront its responsibilities, there might be "adverse consequences

for the stability of the economy and the sustainability of the exchange rate," says the IMF report.

Quoting Saudi officials, the report says current deficits are "clearly unsustainable" and warns that "the pace of adjustment is of the essence."

THE GOVERNMENT has cut expenditure by delaying payment to creditors and by asking suppliers to reduce their bills by up to 20 percent.

According to the report, Saudi officials claimed "there was a legal basis for such measures whereby all government contracts have a provision entitling the government to increase or reduce the value of the contract by 20 percent."

It says the renegotiation of contracts should have been completed by the end of 1994, at which time "delays in payment should be eliminated," but it is understood that as the year draws to a close, the Saudis are still months behind on payments to some of their creditors.

The report notes that while

government subsidies have been cut in some cases, such as wheat, it has been increased in others, such as electricity, in order to allow a "price cut" to win favor among Saudi citizens.

It also notes that Saudi foreign assets "include claims on certain countries that are in varying degrees of illiquidity," an oblique reference to Iraq, which borrowed up to \$20 billion from Riyadh to help finance its eight-year war against Iran.

That debt is unlikely to be repaid. Bilateral relations collapsed with the August 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, and the subsequent Gulf War is estimated to have cost the Saudis about \$55 billion.

According to the IMF, the accumulated debt of the Saudi government, along with its public-sector companies and agencies, now amounts to about \$85 billion, equivalent to about 70 percent of its GDP, and this debt is expected to continue growing.

Foreign reserves stand at \$5.7

billion, which is regarded as relatively modest considering Saudi Arabia's huge oil reserves, but economic sources in London warn that fiscal mismanagement is leading Saudi Arabia into the quicksand.

The determination of the Saudis to cut spending and end years of government financial profligacy has become clear in the run-up to its 1995 budget.

The latest confirmation came last week in a presentation to King Fahd by Governor Hamad Saud al-Sayyari of the Saudi Arabian Monetary Agency - the central bank - speaking of the need for "sacrifices and additional efforts in the short term."

Coming only days after the king himself spoke of budget cuts, the remarks reinforced the impression that Saudi Arabia was set on getting a grip on its finances after more than a decade of budget deficits, financial analysts said.

"It confirms that this government clearly has the capacity to exert fiscal discipline and they will exert this to the degree required to balance the budget,"

said Kevin Tacker, chief economist at Saudi American Bank in Riyadh.

The precise details of the 1995 budget are not due to be revealed before December 31, but it has now become clear that further cuts in some areas are expected and the government will also seek to increase its revenue.

"I think the main intention is to prepare the people for another difficult year in 1995. I think it's a good thing," a Western diplomat commented. "It's a sign the Saudis are facing up to their problems."

Further cuts may aggravate the woes of private contractors, both local and foreign, already feeling the brunt of the 20 percent cut in the 1994 budget to 160 billion riyals (\$42.7 billion).

But there are signs the government is preparing to deal with the chronic arrears in paying contractors, and the analysts said budget discipline sets the stage for sustainable future growth.

"In the short term there's going to be more pain, but it's really good news in the medium- and long term," another analyst said.



Cuban Foreign Minister Roberto Rovaina Gonzalez (left) meets with Iranian President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani. The two countries agreed to eliminate visa requirements for travel, one of several agreements in a letter of understanding endorsed at the end of a two-day visit by Gonzalez. He said Cuba is keen on promoting ties in the areas of energy, technology, pharmaceuticals, sugar exports and health care. Rafsanjani was quoted as saying the expansion of ties between Iran and Cuba was necessary - presumably referring to their mutual political isolation. (AP)

Bahrain PM links riots to foreign influence

MANAMA (AP) - Bahrain's prime minister claims that this month's wave of street riots was instigated by foreign "troublemakers" and praised citizens who didn't join the protests.

Sheikh Khalifa bin Salman al-Khalifa's allegation, reported in local newspapers, mentioned no country as responsible for the deadly disturbances.

However, a Kuwaiti newspaper reported that the riots have been linked to Iran and the Iranian-backed Hizbullah based in Lebanon.

Separately, two exiled Bahraini opposition groups denied that Iran was involved in the unrest in the emirate.

"A group spurred from abroad tried to spread riots and anarchy and create confusion on the Bahrain street to undermine the mantle of tranquility of security and the fraternity of one family of the Bahrain society," Sheikh Khalifa said.

The prime minister, a brother of the emir, Sheikh Isa bin Salman al-Khalifa, told a meeting of businessmen over the weekend that the riots subsided because Bahrainis refused to believe "malicious rumors."

They "aborted the attempt of the troublemakers and those behind them from spreading the flames of sedition, tampering with the country's achievements and threatening its stability," the prime minister said.

There was no comment from Iran on the accusations.

But Mohammed Abdullah, a spokesman for the London-based Bahrain Freedom Movement, denied that Iran was involved.

"Every government in the Middle East, trapped with a demand for political reforms, finds a very easy scapegoat," Abdullah said.

"It is the name of a country

that the West does not like, and that is Iran."

The riots were triggered by the December 5 arrest of a 29-year-old Shi'ite Moslem preacher, Sheikh Ali Salman, on charges of plotting to destabilize the Gulf island state.

Salman had demanded more democracy and more jobs for the Shi'ites, who make up the majority of the half-million inhabitants of the island ruled by a royal family of the rival Sunni branch of Islam.

CLASHES between stone-burling protesters and riot squads raged for two weeks, mainly in poorer Shi'ite neighborhoods of this island, a center for offshore banking and trade in the oil-rich Gulf.

Opposition groups estimated up to nine people were killed and hundreds arrested. The government says one policeman died. The violence appeared to have abated over the weekend.

In a report from Bahrain, the Kuwaiti daily *Al-Siyassah* quoted anonymous security sources as blaming an opposition group called the Islamic Front for the Liberation of Bahrain for instigating the violence.

The newspaper said its leader, Mohammad Ali Mahfouz, lives in Beirut's southern suburbs and receives orders from Tehran through Hizbullah.

The newspaper also said a number of people in Bahrain were arrested for making telephone calls abroad and requesting weapons and explosives to use in the disturbances. It was not known if the people were connected to Mahfouz's group.

Mahfouz, in an interview with the Paris-based Arabic service of Radio Monte Carlo, denied that Iran was involved in the Bahrain troubles.

Kuwait experiences Islamist revival

WILLIAM MACLEAN
KUWAIT

REMIGIO Espiritu once preached Christianity as an evangelist in his native Philippines.

Today he still preaches, but now Mohammad Espiritu expounds Islam from the pulpit of a mosque in Kuwait.

Espiritu, 60, works for the Islamic Presentation Committee (IPC), an influential religious education body which sees itself as part of the worldwide Islamic revival. It recently suffered budget cuts, but says its work and ambitions are unaffected.

"I am a searcher for original truth in religion, and I have found Islam is the correct religion," says Espiritu, a slight, bespectacled former taxi driver who came to Kuwait in 1987.

Once a part-time Christian lay preacher back home, he has taken the new first names of Mohammad Abdullah and works from modern offices in a mosque. He preaches to some of the 1,000 foreigners who converted in 1993 after studies at the IPC center.

Despite funding reductions that have curbed its activities, the IPC, founded in 1988, plans to continue playing a role in what it calls humanity's Islamic rebirth

by giving religious education to non-Muslims seeking to convert. Ironically, the IPC says its budget-trimming stems from the very success of the Islamic movement in Kuwait.

Private donations, source of half of IPC's funding, have fallen because of growing competition for donations from a mushrooming number of Islamist groups. Also, the government this year reduced support for the IPC as part of state belt-tightening.

"What it means is that instead of having four competitors a year, we'll have just two, or instead of making eight videos a year, we'll make four," says Rashed.

"More organizations mean everyone gets smaller chunks," he added.

"Everybody's got funds going somewhere. Everybody sends part of their money to somewhere - to Africa, Asia, Yemen, Bosnia."

"If an earthquake happens in Indonesia, the second day there are adverts in the paper for mon-

ey. In the mosque, the speaker will speak and people will give everything in their pockets. The women will take off all their gold and throw it down."

Some newspaper columnists have suggested some rich Kuwaiti Islamic groups that send millions of dollars each year in charity overseas also have links to armed militants abroad.

Rashed says Moslem extremists who killed innocent people did wrong and Islamists in general ought to heed valid criticism.

"If people do not criticize us, we will sink to the level of extremists, by thinking we are always on the right track," he says. "We watch ourselves very closely. When I make my budget, I take care that all the books are correct, that all our activities are clean and known to everybody."

The IPC says its role is not to convert but to present Islam correctly to those who are interested. Saleh says the ministries of Islamic Affairs and Justice probably register more conversions, but figures are not readily

available.

Rashed's group also extends practical support to Asian domestic workers who are in difficulties with their employers.

Kuwaitis employ about 180,000 Asian domestic servants, the majority women. Embassies report persistent abuse of servants by Kuwaiti and non-Kuwaiti employers, such as nonpayment of wages, verbal and physical harassment, and in some cases sexual abuse.

Kuwaiti officials say most complaints are fabricated by maids wanting to get out of their contracts and go home.

Rashed says it is time Islamists discussed human rights more openly and adds that an anti-Islamist newspaper commentator who publicizes the issue deserved praise.

"Kuwaitis are not angels. We have Satans in this society. I am sorry that we have them," (Reuters)

Rafsanjani rules out third term

TEHERAN - President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani has said he would not seek to change the Iranian constitution so that he could serve a third term.

"I personally don't think it's advisable to amend the constitution, and I wouldn't like to extend my executive responsibilities," Rafsanjani said in an interview on Iranian television at the weekend.

Rafsanjani's second four-year term ends in August 1997. His aides had floated the idea of changing the constitution, which does not allow a person to serve more than two successive terms as president.

Rafsanjani, 60, has been one of the most influential clerics in the Islamic republic founded in 1979 by his mentor, the late Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini.

Meanwhile, opponents of Ayatollah Hossein Ali Montazeri, one of the senior clerics critical of the leadership, have demonstrated against Rafsanjani in the holy city of Qom, an Iranian newspaper said.

Demonstrators gathered in front of Montazeri's home after leaflets were distributed urging people to disrupt his theology classes, *Jahan-e Eslam* said.

Police surrounded the area and dispersed the protesters. Classes were not disrupted, the paper said.

In a later protest, demonstrators chanted slogans in favor of Iran's supreme political leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, it said.

Montazeri's office in Qom, 120 km south of Tehran, declined to comment on the report.

Montazeri, 72, had criticized government policies including treatment of political prisoners. Khomeini's aides accused him of links with armed groups.

Last month parliamentary Speaker Ali Akbar Nateq-Nouri was quoted as saying it would be "harmful and dangerous" if Montazeri were allowed to be promoted as a top spiritual leader of Shi'ite Moslems. (Agencies)

Cairo antiquity sent to Japan leads to false charge of fakery

EGYPT'S top archeologists and restorers of antiquities gathered at the Egyptian Museum in Cairo this week after a scare over the authenticity of a painted stela that has just returned from a tour of Japan.

But within 15 minutes, the experts were able to certify the piece was indeed the original and that the Japanese had not sent back a replica. "It seems that someone passing by noticed that the colors were much brighter than on the pieces next to it, which really do look much older. So he thought it was a fake," said Culture Minister Farouk Hosni, who also turned up for the occasion.

The tour of Japan had been controversial from the start and the minister was eager to kill off any doubts about the stela.

The 72 pieces in the Japanese tour came home earlier this month, days before a Cairo court ruled that some of them were too special and too fragile to leave the country in the first place.

Hosni said the people who campaigned against the tour had publicized doubts about the stela's authenticity.

"There are people who are always trying to make life complicated. To look for problems," he told reporters.

Foreign archeologists summoned to vouch for the stela said the affair was a storm in a teacup.

"It would be completely impossible to make a convincing replica in such a short time," said Reinhard Stadelmann, director of the German Archeological Institute in Cairo.

The funerary stela, a gravestone dating from about 2000 BCE, shows the 11th dynasty Pharaoh Amenemhat and his family. (Reuters)

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Altercation over land

IN the altercation between the Judean community of Efrat and the Arab village of El Khader over a stretch of land known as Givat Tamar the government at first acted with courage, determination and integrity. This should have been expected. After all, the authorities, acting through the civil administration and the army, did no more than uphold the law.

There is no question that the law is on the side of the Efrat residents. The land, a desolate, rocky area in Gush Etzion south of Jerusalem, is state land. It was declared as such in 1991, after every home in the neighboring village of El Khader was informed the court would examine any and all counter-claims to the land. Several such claims were submitted, but after thorough examination the Supreme Court found them all fictitious. The land then became the responsibility of the Land Authority.

More recently, the area was leased for 49 years to a private foundation, which paid close to NIS 2.5 million for the lease. Like all such transactions, this required and received the approval of the ministries of defense, justice and housing. The defense minister, who is, of course, also the prime minister, made it clear that he saw no reason to delay the project, intended to house close to 500 families.

Clearly, then, the El Khader protesters, abetted by Peace Now leaders, have no legal leg to stand on. Their claim that the land belongs to the Arab villagers is baseless. If anything, it is the protesters who are guilty of violating the law by trespassing on privately-owned land, interfering with government-sanctioned construction, and inciting to violence.

Leaving aside the impropriety of Knesset members acting in concert with PLO leaders against the Israeli army, the fact is that the Palestinians and their Israeli allies are not protesting an allegedly illegal appropriation of land from individuals. What they believe they are fighting is "the robbery of Palestinian land by settlers helped by the occupiers' bayonets," as Communications Minister Shulamit Aloni put it on Monday.

The dispute, then, is not legal but political. Palestinian spokesmen and their Israeli supporters in the government and the Peace Now movement say - not without logic - that the

government's actions contradict the spirit of the Oslo agreement. The new neighborhood, they claim, is actually a new settlement, something the government promised it would not permit. By supporting it, they insist, the government is signaling that it has no intention of evacuating Judea and Samaria.

Nor are the Palestinians the only ones who interpret the Oslo agreement as a first step to the complete withdrawal from the territories. The whole world expects the "final status" agreement to bring about precisely this result. Failure to do so would open Israel to charges of bad faith. To the world, constructing a new neighborhood in Judea is incompatible with the Declaration of Principles.

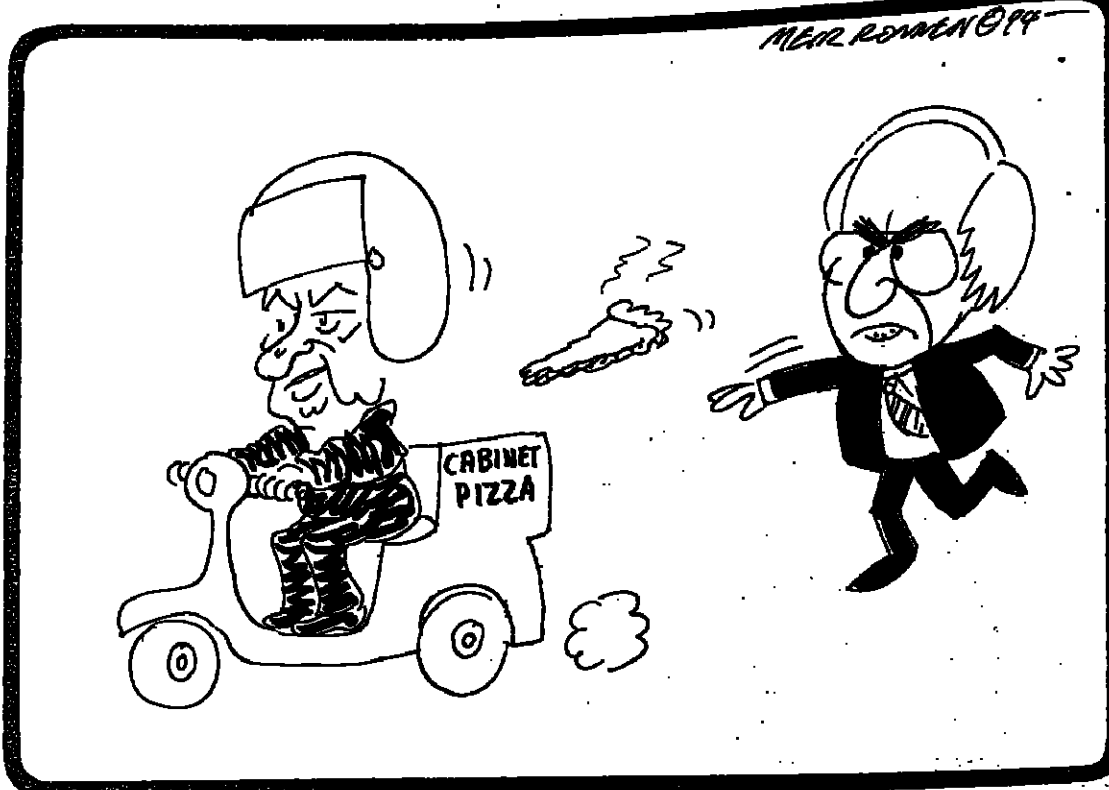
On the other side of the fence, those who oppose Israeli evacuation, deeming it a mortal danger to the state's existence, were pleasantly surprised by the government's actions. They, too, have found in it a sign the government may not readily withdraw from all of the territories, and that at least Gush Etzion, where Jewish communities existed before the War of Independence, will be incorporated into Israel.

But last night Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres announced that the whole project would be reexamined. The Palestinian warnings - echoed abroad - that the building of Jewish homes in the "West Bank" would sound the peace process's death knell must have made an impression. The fierce opposition of dovish Labor and Meretz ministers must have also given the two leaders pause.

Not for the first time, the government has painted itself into a corner. If it yields to the Palestinian threats and halts construction, it will radiate weakness, lose credibility and earn well-deserved contempt. If it allows the construction to continue, it will subject itself to international pressures and Palestinian calumny.

But if the government truly intends not to withdraw to the 1949 armistice lines when the "final status" agreement is concluded, and if it really wants to prevent the establishment of a PLO-Hamas state on these borders, as it says it does, it should realize Givat Tamar is as good a place as any to make its stand. If opinion polls can be believed, such a stand will enjoy the support of a solid majority of the population.

Uneatable



Pitiful
pap

HARVEY EDINOFF

IN yesterday's *Jerusalem Post*, Aryeh Dean Cohen quite rightly criticized the quality of both the programming and delivery of the cable companies' relay of the Eurosport channel.

In this instance, he was writing in his capacity as a sports commentator. Had he written as a television critic, he could have broadened his criticism to include virtually all the other channels imposed upon us by the five cable franchisees.

The Family Channel feeds us a repetitive, unending supply of American sitcoms, mostly ancient, and with virtually no Israeli content.

The Movie Channel has gone from bad to worse. Invariably, the prime-time film which goes out at 9 p.m. is a cops/drug dealers/serial-killer action movie with predictable doses of explicit violence, gratuitous sex and bad language, bound together by weak plots.

The Children's Channel becomes another family channel after 7:30 p.m. Once again we are offered sitcoms for two and a half

Cable consumers should get off their couches and demand a fair deal

hours. Even worse, we are fed ancient American programs which were originally designed to be seen on a weekly basis. We see these shows every night. Eventually they turn into the equivalent of background music.

Add to these pitiful offerings three sports channels and a large number of irrelevant, unsubstantiated satellite channels (according to rating polls, these are watched by around 1 percent of all subscribers), and that's what you get for around \$30 monthly.

POLLS SHOW that the channel most watched by cable subscribers is Israel's Channel 2 - which indicates that most Israelis want Israeli programs, and that many pay the cable's exorbitant monthly charge because they can see Channel 2 only through the cable network.

The reason for the poor quality offered is very simple. The cable companies do not spend enough on programming.

According to the cable trade magazine *Multichannel News*, American cable operators spend 49 percent of their income from subscribers on program acquisition. In Israel, the operators devote less than 20 percent of their income to programming. An old "B" movie is a lot cheaper than a new "A" movie.

That's why we get poor movies, unless you live in the Tel Aviv area and want to pay an additional \$3 per movie to see more recent releases.

The cable industry collects a massive \$280 million annually from its subscribers, and laughs all the way to the bank. It's about time subscribers took some action to impress the operators that we are no longer willing to put up with the expensive rubbish imposed on us.

One way to do this is to require the Communications Minister to enforce adherence to the conditions under which the cable operators' licenses were originally granted.

Where is the Israeli content in the channels produced by the cable operators? Where is the additional "Middle Eastern" channel they undertook to produce?

How many local productions, dramas, sitcoms and suchlike have been produced or financed by the operators?

In Canada, cable franchisees are required to broadcast prime-time local productions, and must contribute a significant proportion of their income to independent film and TV development funds. These are conditions of their franchises.

In Israel, there are no such obligations, and apparently nobody either imposes qualitative control on the industry or enforces mandatory regulations.

We need a "Cable Watch" body to represent the consumer. We have the power of over 700,000 households and nearly \$300 million a year behind us. We should use it.

The writer works in the local film industry.

Gaza without the IDF

SHLOMO GAZIT

THE situation in the Gaza Strip six months after the withdrawal of IDF forces isn't encouraging. Any detailed examination of it must lead to some depressing conclusions.

But were expectations too high? And has the situation really come as a surprise? The answer is that if there is a surprise, it's a positive one.

Objective difficulties notwithstanding, the situation in the Strip, from the point of view of its Palestinian residents, is better than they anticipated (and that could also perhaps, be said of the Israeli settlers living in the Strip).

There's no anarchy, the atmosphere is positive, and the initial feeling that the occupation is over is still in evidence. The violent confrontation that occurred a month ago during a mass demonstration organized by Hamas was an isolated instance.

There are no violent clashes between different groups, despite the quantities of weapons in the area. The Strip, at least as of now, isn't Beirut.

I had nurtured totally different, higher expectations. However, they didn't stem from the IDF's evacuation of Gaza, but from the Oslo and Washington agreements signed 15 months ago. The Cairo agreement, nine months later, was the antithesis of Oslo.

It didn't constitute a new page or any statement of goodwill, but represented a return to haggling over every tiny detail, as though the two parties were still deeply enmeshed in conflict.

First and foremost, they don't yet see a light at the end of the tunnel. We haven't even really left Gaza; all the settlements are still in place, and the IDF protective deployment has neither disappeared nor shrunk. On the contrary, in the Palestinians' eyes at least, it has actually grown.

Secondly, the road to the next phase so essential for the Palestinians - general elections - is still blocked; and without elections, Arafat and his supporters cannot gain vital legitimacy. Only elections will make it possible to claim that Arafat has a mandate.

As for annulling the covenant, Arafat and his supporters need a clear majority in the Palestine National Council. Under the current conditions they do not have a majority, and there's no prospect they will.

On the socioeconomic issue, here also we're back to square one. Security problems force Israel to seal the border, stopping the flow of laborers, and there is no other short-term solution which can provide 100,000 jobs.

As of now, it's important that we examine the entire process, and not just the way it looks today. Regrettably, the forecast for its success is rather gloomy. To improve its prospects, both parties must concentrate on finding a way to reinvigorate the process.

The writer, a former head of IDF intelligence, is a senior research fellow at Tel Aviv University's Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies.

What do the Palestinians lack?

What do the Palestinians lack?

A failed experiment

GERALD STEINBERG

A scientist who cannot distinguish between the success or failure of an experiment should never have conducted it in the first place. Similarly, "political experiments" must have clear criteria by which their success or failure can be judged.

A successful enterprise should be encouraged and nurtured, but a total failure needs to be halted to minimize the damage.

The negotiations, discussions and summit meetings that make up the "Middle East peace process" constitute a very important political experiment, one in which over five million Israelis are the subjects. Unfortunately, none of the architects of this process have devised any objective criteria for judging the outcome. They cannot tell whether they are succeeding or failing; they don't even seem to understand why such criteria are necessary.

Rabin, Peres, Arafat, and their American sponsors proclaim that the Israeli-Palestinian agreements are "irreversible," and, in the long-term, must be successful. They and their colleagues proclaim that "there is no alternative." (This was the theme of all three Nobel Prize addresses in Oslo.) Thus, by definition, the Middle East peace process is deemed a success.

Yet with terrorism and Palestinian hatred of Israel and Jews not only continuing but growing, any commonsense analysis of the results of the Oslo agreement would judge it an abject and tragic failure. The mutual recognition agreement has not prevented Arafat and other Palestinian leaders from continuing to preach hatred.

The only operative clause of the agreement, which commits the PLO to the revision of the sections of the Palestinian Covenant that call for the elimination of Israel, is being ignored. Simi-

larly, the Declaration of Principles signed by Israel and the PLO, and the Gaza-Jericho agreement that followed, have not led to any change in Palestinian hatred and violence.

At best, these agreements have allowed Israeli forces to leave some parts of Gaza, but the same results could have been obtained with a unilateral pullout. The Palestinian Authority has not disarmed Hamas, and there are sui-

cide bombers in the ranks of the Palestinian police.

RABIN AND Peres refer to Palestinian terrorists as opponents of the peace process. Each suicide bombing and attack is attributed to efforts to obstruct Arab-Israeli reconciliation. We are told that firm military action is impossible, because it would disrupt the negotiations, thereby "granting the terrorists a victory."

Once this perspective is adopted, whatever Israel does will be a victory for the terrorists; its continued inaction allows Hamas and its supporters to continue to kill Israelis with impunity.

The architects of the "peace" have been able to escape a serious accounting and evaluation by insisting on the "irreversibility of the peace process." This claim has no foundation.

The proverbial dustbins of history, including those in the Middle East, are filled with agreements that have not been honored, and with failed experiments. (An exception is the

peace treaty with Egypt, which has lasted for over 15 years, and can be judged a limited success, at least so far.)

In 1949, Israel signed cease-fire agreements with Egypt, Syria, Lebanon and Jordan that explicitly obligated all the parties to negotiate a permanent peace. But once the military pressure ended, the Arabs refused to honor these commitments.

Defenders of the Oslo agreement argue that it is too early to pull the plug, pronounce the patient dead, and write the autopsy. Instead, Rabin and Peres tell Israelis to wait "a little longer," and the benefits will become apparent.

Each period of failure leads to the same refrain. The question is how much longer, and what benefits? Two years, and terrorist attempts and casualties go down by half; or 20 years and terrorism is reduced by 10 percent?

No such predictions have been forthcoming in this experiment, in which we are guided by intuition and self-interest. Rabin, Peres and Arafat have invested their political careers as well as their place in history in this process, and the psychological barriers to the admission of failure are very high.

The 1996 elections will provide a reality check. If Rabin and Peres can convince the majority of Israelis that they have succeeded in making progress toward peace, they will be given an additional term to continue the experiment.

But if the majority are ready to call the process a failure, as now seems likely, the electorate will force an end to it - or at least force major revisions and the beginning of a new experiment.

The writer directs research on arms control and Israeli security at Bar-Ilan University's BESA Center for Strategic Studies.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

HOMOSEXUAL RELATIONS

Sir, - I wish to protest the activities of the Orthodox religious lobby in casting aspersions on the juridical and moral integrity of Professor Barak and their attempts to introduce legislation to circumvent the High Court judgment supporting a homosexual partner's right to certain perks granted to heterosexual partners.

Nonetheless, I regard the Judaic prohibitions of incest and homosexual relations, though not the penalties, as still valid, even in our permissive secular world. I would view any public acknowledgment of these relations as possessing the same legal, social or religious validity as the traditional civil or ecclesiastical bond of man and wife as a sad day indeed for the Jewish State. I would also hope that even our secular educational system would never deny its Jewish and universal heritage to the extent of indoctrinating its pupils to accept homosexual relations as a legitimate and laudable alternative, in any circumstance, to the heterosexual ideal of family life.

But that should not involve any invasion into the private sexual behavior of adult consenting parties. As I understand it, High Court Justice Barak's judgment to support the rights of homosexual partners to the same perks as those awarded heterosexual ones was based not on their private sexual behavior, but on their conducting a "joint household" (*meshuk bayit meshukim*). If this is indeed the case, then the proper response of those committed to the preservation of the specific Jewish heritage and the universally acknowledged values of family life is to submit a test case involving other "joint households" such as a parent and adult issue or any two adults who conduct a joint household on a relatively permanent basis. Their sexual behavior inside their own four walls should be quite irrelevant. But if it was, then this would be a monstrous invasion of privacy violating the constitutionally sacrosanct rights of the individual.

I imagine, in any case, that the last word has not been said on determining the definition and status of a "joint household," when it is regarded as terminated and what the legal repercussions are as far as inheritance is concerned. In the light of all this, I feel that the gut response of the Orthodox religious lobby is somewhat premature and ill-conceived.

ARYEH NEWMAN
Jerusalem

DISMAYED

Sir, - As a supporter of the peace process, I am dismayed by Walid M. Awad's letter of December 7, which calls for the removal of Jewish "settlements" in the areas occupied by Israel since 1967, just as I was when the late Rabbi Meir Kahane called for the removal of Arabs from Israel.

I am dismayed, in particular, because Mr. Awad portrays himself as a representative of the moderate "secular, pragmatic sector" as opposed to the presumably less moderate "Islamic-oriented sector" within Palestinian Arab society, and yet he implies the need for a forced population exchange with all the hardships such a course would bring.

Except for the 1948-1967 period of expulsion, Jews have lived in these areas for thousands of years and if peace is to have any meaning, peaceful Jews must be free to live in them in safety just as peaceful Arabs must be free to live in Israel in safety for thousands of years to come.

HARRIS O. SCHOENBERG,
Director,
The International Council of B'nai B'rith
New York

THE KARENS

Sir, - May I be allowed to add to Shalva Weil's article of November 27 on the fanciful and mostly spurious claims of peoples who say they are descendants of the lost tribes? During the days of empire, the British Colonial Office published in the official *Burma Gazette* detailed accounts of the history and religious rites of the people under its domain. In its issue of 1871, a Dr. Mason wrote of the Old Testament traditions of the Karen tribe living in eastern Burma. The story of the creation and of Adam and Eve is parallel with our own biblical account. Their folklore tells of a chieftain who was close to God and led them over a "sea of sand" to a land which was their own. They have no knowledge as to where this land was, or from where they came from prior to their migration in the second century from central Asia. The traditions of the Karen have no allusions to Christian beliefs, they are animists, praying to a "God of Spirits" who controls their destiny.

Academics of Dr. Weil's standing, who are free of political bias, have a responsibility to Jewish history to examine the traditions of those who may be of Jewish descent.

DAVID BAKER
Arad

THE NOBEL PEACEPRIZE

Sir, - Peace-loving people the world over must have recoiled in horror and shame as Yasser Arafat received his Nobel "Peace" Prize in Oslo. I preferred to be in the midst of 1,500 people who jammed the Ramada Renaissance ballroom to hear Mr. Kaare Kristiansen speak. Sitting on the dais with those representing the Coalition for Missing Soldiers, Mr. Kristiansen enumerated his motives for resigning from the Nobel Peace Prize Selection Committee.

I had read much of what he said in the newspaper during the preceding weeks. To hear his words spoken in such a modest and self-effacing manner was nevertheless an incredibly moving experience. He could not, he said, see what all the fuss was about. He was only following his conscience.

And therein lies the crux of the matter. Where is the collective conscience of the world? Where are the leaders who will stand up and be counted? Have we fallen so low as to reward terror with peace prizes? Surely this debases the memory of hundreds of innocent people killed over the years at the hand of Yasser Arafat.

To my utter amazement, not one word of this significant gathering was reported on the Voice of Israel English radio news the following morning. If a man with principles and integrity - without question a Righteous Gentile - is not deemed newsworthy in a Jewish state, I don't know what is.

I salute you, Mr. Kristiansen.

FERN DOBULER

Beit El Bet.

NO CHAMBERLAIN

Sir, - To those who call Rabin a Chamberlain, we say Yitzhak Rabin is no Chamberlain. Chamberlain gave away Czechoslovakia. Even he knew that if you really want to give something up for peace, you must give away some other country's land, not your own.

Chamberlain would be insulted at being compared to Rabin. And the English would have tossed Chamberlain out on his rear had he even hinted at giving away part of England for any reason.

Shame on us all for allowing the "peace process" to get this far.

ARTHUR AND YECHEZKEL GOLDBERG
New York and Jerusalem

مكتبة الناصر

Relevance is no longer the buzzword

In her most recent book 'None to Accompany Me,' South African novelist Nadine Gordimer tackles the tumultuous transformation of her native country, Vivienne Walt writes

A few years ago, Nadine Gordimer, South Africa's best-known novelist, gathered a group of aspiring writers from the black townships into a cramped little room in central Johannesburg, where she introduced her guest from across the ocean — Arthur Miller.

Miller, a tall man with a world-confidence, rose, dwarfing the diminutive Gordimer. But aside from the usual praise for the youths' fight against apartheid, the playwright issued something close to a rebuke.

Their writing, their theater, their poetry, Miller told them,

were so filled with political rage, that many of their efforts could become worthless cant, with a shelf life as short as the white government igniting their fury.

The young comrades shifted uncomfortably, muttering to each other.

But up front, a half-smile fleetingly crossed Gordimer's delicate face, relief that this American visitor could say what was perhaps too politically incorrect for her to state.

"For years there was a certain conformity" among dissident anti-apartheid writers, she said in a recent interview while promot-



Gordimer: It's really thrilling now to see how people's lives have totally changed. (Erica Berger/Newsday)

ing her new novel, *None to Accompany Me*. "It was inhibiting. There were many situations of their lives — childhood, for example — that were regarded as irrelevant to

write about," said Gordimer, who won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1991.

"Relevance" was the buzzword.

Gordimer, who published her first short story at age 15, and has written 11 novels and several collections of essays, has spent years defining that concept. From the start, she has held that the most basic stuff of life — sex, marriage, death — could illuminate every political truth of her tormented country.

But those truths have dramatically and indelibly changed since Nelson Mandela's African National Congress was voted into power six months ago.

For a dissident writer who has spent her brilliant career expressing her disgust for the previous government, that fact might cause some disturbance, or perhaps a loss of direction.

The importance of writers like Gordimer, as well as other white South African dissidents like Alan Paton, and more recently Andre Brink and J.M. Coetzee, is that they told fictional tales that, as factual accounts, would have been banished from the censored newspaper and television services. Now, under a constitution that guarantees free speech, their role could well diminish.

But Gordimer insists that even within democracy, "writers tend always to be to a certain extent dissident."

"There is this mistaken idea that apartheid was my subject," she said. "It wasn't. People have always been my subject. I started to write out of a desire to make sense of human life. But the way that life was lived was dominated by the racist situation," she says. "So inevitably, all my characters

were imbued with a political sense, consciously or unconsciously."

HER NEW book, published in October by Farrar, Straus and Giroux, tackles the tumultuous transformation.

"These are strange days, in which personal lives have been turned upside down by the dizzying changes, leaving South Africans with a sense both of closure and of limitless new possibilities. This best captured in one sentence of the novel: 'Perhaps the passing away of an old regime makes abandonment of an old self possible.'"

Gordimer's new protagonist, Vera Stark, is a white political lawyer charged with fighting to regain blacks' land that has been expropriated by the apartheid government. A sensuality exudes from Vera on every page, whether she is traveling the stark scrubland through rural villages, or bedding a far younger lover during the afternoons, and then driving home to have dinner with her suburban husband and daughter.

But it is Vera's "arrival" in the new South Africa that signals an uncertain, and perhaps lonelier, future.

There is a tranquility. But it been wrought at an exhausting price.

Gordimer has never left any doubt that her political colors were firmly fastened to the ANC. South Africa's censors banned three of her earlier novels, one of which, *Burger's Daughter*, was inspired by Nelson Mandela's white lawyer, Bram Fischer. And when Mandela emerged from jail nearly five years ago, Gordimer was one of the first luminaries he requested to see. The friendship

has strengthened ever since.

Still under apartheid, Gordimer founded the Congress of South African Writers, whose 5,000 members around the country — many writing in vernaculars — linked together a growing movement of anti-apartheid activists who chose to express their politics on paper, and often faced stiff consequences as a result.

These days, Gordimer travels frequently, partly to spend time with her son, a film producer living in Manhattan, and her daughter, who lives in France. But it is back home in Johannesburg that Gordimer works. And it is that environment that has infused all her writing.

Gordimer describes the feeling now almost of unreality, as she sees the banned and exiled artists she befriended decades ago — like the poet Wally Serote — now sitting in parliament as legislators for the ANC government.

"It's really thrilling now to see how people's lives have totally changed," she says, and although she is not working on a new novel, she imagines that "for a long time" her subjects will be intimately bound up with the country's politics.

"Life doesn't stop with the end of apartheid. Human beings still have frustrations of ambitions, and realizations of some ambitions."

But when asked whether power corrupts, and might corrupt her close friends, she says, "with people who are corruptible, yes."

"Certainly, Mandela is not. These people have spent years in exile, they've lived in many different countries... They learned a lesson, about what happens when power corrupts." (Newsday)

Yiddish in the barracks of America's Legionnaires

A US World War I veteran tells Marilyn Henry about the fight for Palestine in Allenby's army

ABRAHAM Grabowsky left Poland for New York and signed up for the army. That was some 77 years ago. The army was British, and his destination was Palestine.

He was out to join Edmund Allenby, who captured Jerusalem in December 1917 and whose Egyptian Expeditionary Forces later wrested Palestine and Syria from the Turks.

In the summer of 1918, Grabowsky set out with Allenby's brigade as an infantryman in the 39th Royal Fusiliers.

"I was in the second group that left [the US] for Palestine," said Grabowsky, now 98 and living in the Bronx. "We had 10,000 Legionnaires, young men fighting for Palestine."

"The Jewish boys went all over Palestine. There was a rumor that there were 40,000 Jewish soldiers going to fight," he said, laughing. Over 5,000 are recorded as having been in active duty with the legion.

Grabowsky got to the US in 1911. Originally from Russian-ruled Poland, he landed in Galveston, Texas, on a boat from Bremen. "I was one of the Jacob Schiff immigrants," he said. From 1906, the US financier/philanthropist financed a program that diverted Jewish immigrants from northeastern and midwestern cities, where many had already clustered, to smaller cities in the South.

"He donated money to get immigrants to go to other places than New York," Grabowsky recalls.

But soon, Grabowsky ended up in New York anyway, by way of Michigan, where he had been an autoworker. "In New York, I joined the Zionist organization, Poalei Zion, and I used to go collecting money every week."

Across the ocean, the war was escalating, while the US was not yet involved. In Britain, Vladimir Jabotinsky was recruiting soldiers for the Jewish Legion. The legion was the successor to the Zion Mule Corps, which had dis-

tinguished itself in 1915-16 at Gallipoli.

The legion found volunteers in the US among new arrivals who, as noncitizens, were not eligible for the American military. "We had the right to enlist in the British army to fight for the Jewish homeland because we were not citizens," Grabowsky said.

"When the Balfour Declaration came out, I joined the legion. We went into theaters to solicit volunteers. The Jewish Legion was very popular. At that time, Jewish people were in favor of the Jewish Legion and Palestine. I was happy to go. I wanted to fight for a Jewish homeland."

Grabowsky's unit arrived in Egypt, near the Suez Canal, where they encamped and trained.

"It was Yiddish in the barracks, and with the British we spoke English," he recalled. "In training, we had the Magen David on our sleeves, but otherwise we were nothing but British soldiers."

"Once a week, on Saturday, we had a cantor who said the prayers for us. We went to synagogue like they went to church. Nothing special. We were soldiers."

When the Jewish troops were first organized, there had been some assurances that they would have Jewish names and emblems.

Instead, owing to the influence of anti-Zionist Jews, the units were designated the Royal Fusiliers. It was only at the end of the campaign for Palestine that the name was changed to the "Judean Regiment."

Grabowsky's devotion was to Palestine. But the it was clear that he was fighting in a world war: his unit was part of an international cast. By the autumn of 1918, Britain was drawing troops from its far-flung empire to prepare to cross the Jordan. "Allenby was a general in the British army. He had the Hindu army and the Jewish army to fight against Turkey."

The Allenby brigade transport-



Abraham Grabowsky: In training, we had the Magen David on our sleeves, but otherwise we were nothing but British soldiers.

ed the soldiers by train from Egypt, and they arrived in Lod. "Palestine was nothing at that time," he said. "Jaffa was a big city. But Tel Aviv consisted of three buildings. It was nothing but sand."

Grabowsky's unit encamped at Rishon LeZion, building Sarafand (Tzrifin) and then moving on to the front.

"We went to the Judean Hills. We walked, and from there we went to Jerusalem, and from Jerusalem to the Jordan Valley, not far from the Dead Sea," he said. "I still remember we worked on Yom Kippur to dig trenches."

Allenby found the Turks again across the Jordan River, from which he pressed on to Damascus and Aleppo, forcing Turkey out of the war on October 31. His successful military campaigns led Britain to name him viscount of the unlikely combination of Megiddo and Felixstowe, a seaside

resort in eastern England.

Grabowsky recalled the British campaign with some annoyance.

"They wouldn't let us fight. We did other work around the front lines, but they wouldn't let us fight for the land. They were afraid that if they let Jews fight, we would demand too much, and

they didn't want to give us Palestine."

He finally encountered the Turks in a desert town in Jordan, al-Salt, and his unit was assigned to accompany thousands of pris-

oners to camps in the Jordan Valley. By then the war was nearly over, and his next assignment was with the British occupation forces.

After the war, Grabowsky, who spent time in a field hospital after contracting malaria, wanted to be discharged in Palestine.

He planned to attend an agricultural school to learn to farm. "But the British wouldn't let us stay unless we'd reenlist, which I refused. I didn't want to sign up in the army. I wanted to get out. I couldn't stay in Palestine. I couldn't go to Australia, because they didn't want Jews, so I came back to America."

That was in September 1919. He wandered around the US, living in the West. He worked on a railroad and then as a painter, a trade he took with him when he finally settled in New York, where he has lived for more than half a century.

To commemorate a different half-century, he made his first trip back to Israel. "When I was there in 1967, in May, it was 50 years since we enlisted in the Jewish Legion. We went to Israel to celebrate our 50th anniversary, and we had with us Ben-Gurion, Rabin, Eshkol. And Tel Aviv, it was like a small New York."

Looking back, Grabowsky was disheartened by the path that events in the Middle East have taken in the seven decades since he was a soldier with Allenby.

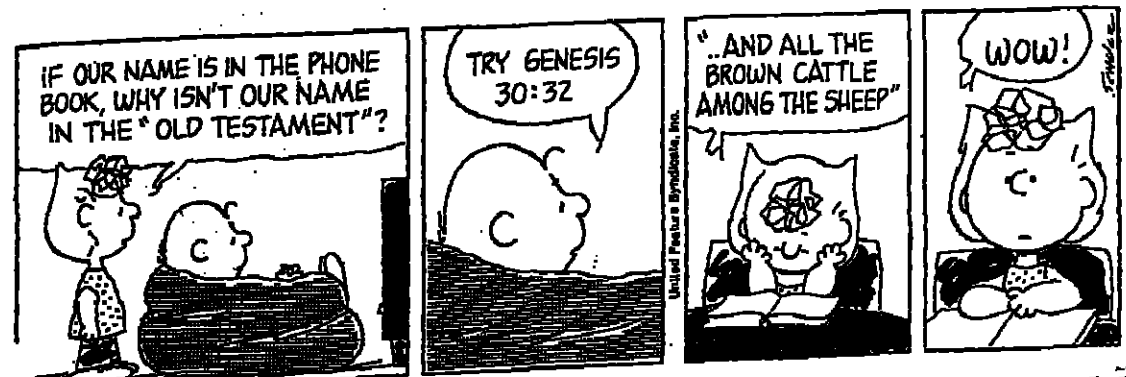
"In 1918, we could go to the Walling Wall. It was a tiny, little wall, because it was covered under debris," he said. "But the Arabs and the Jews in Jerusalem lived together like cousins."

"And I thought it was going to be one nation between the Arabs and the Jews. I never thought it was going to turn out this way."

"It was the British that created all that trouble, the breakup, and separated the Arabs and the Jews."

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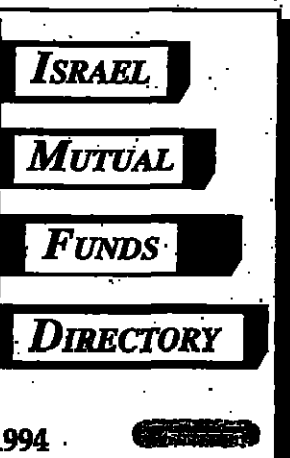
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WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 28, 1994

All duties on US imports will be eliminated on Sunday

Purchase taxes, levies on agricultural imports to remain

JOSE ROSENFELD

ALL duties on US imports will be eliminated as of January 1 under the Free Trade Area (FTA) agreement with the US, the Treasury announced yesterday.

However, Industry and Trade Ministry foreign trade director Zohar Peri said that levies on agricultural imports will remain.

Peri explained that unlike duties, which protect local goods from competition with imports, the levies are aimed at neutralizing government agricultural

subsidies.

Peri noted that the FTA allows for levies on agricultural imports. Asked if the Americans share the same view, he answered "the Americans always do the opposite from us, but I think they will agree in the end."

The 1985 FTA agreement gradually eliminated duties on imports, completing the process in January.

At that time, the following re-

maining duties will be canceled: 14 percent on refrigerators, 10.5 percent on air conditioners, 11.2 percent on motors, 16%-22 percent on shoes, 18 percent on telephones, 12.7 percent on cellular or cordless phones, 12 percent on car batteries and up to 3 percent on textile products.

In addition, duties of 16 percent on fruit and vegetable preserves, 14%-16 percent on fresh fruit and vegetables, 15 percent on flour, 16 percent on

processed meat and 8%-52 percent on milk products will be eliminated.

Customs spokesman Idit Lev-Zarbei said despite the removal of duties, both the purchase tax and *tama* (tax to reflect wholesale price) will remain on items.

For example, the *tama* tax on a cellular phone is 30 percent, while the purchase tax is 10 percent.

US officials consider the *tama* tax to be an indirect duty, since *tama* tax rates on imports are higher than on local products.

INDUSTRIAL production jumped eight percent in the first 10 months of the year compared with the same period last year, the Central Bureau of Statistics reported yesterday.

However, increases in industrial jobs lagged behind the expansion of industrial productivity. While work hours rose at an annual rate of 5 percent, employment only went up 3 percent.

Industrial production growth was uneven during the first 10

Industrial production jumps 8% in first 10 months of year

JOSE ROSENFELD

months of the year.

During the first third, production surged 8.5 percent continuing the high growth rates of 1993.

In the second third, growth moderated a bit to 6.5 percent, decreasing to 1.2 percent in September and October.

All industrial sectors registered production rises except for transportation vehicles, which fell 7 percent. By contrast, clothing, wood

and wood products and basic metals registered production gains of between 14 percent and 17 percent.

Leather and leather products, rubber and plastic, chemicals, non-ferrous minerals and metal products increased between 9 percent and 13 percent.

Production of food, textiles, electric and electronic machinery and equipment rose between 6 percent and 8 percent, while the remaining sectors registered gains of between 4 percent and 5 percent.

Histadrut predicts 12% inflation next year

MICHAEL YUDELMAN

INFLATION will be 12 percent next year, Dr. Roby Nathanson, head of the Histadrut's Institute for Economic and Social Research, predicted yesterday.

The Histadrut's predictions of economic developments, inflation and unemployment rates have proven much more accurate than the government's in recent years. Last year, for instance, Nathanson estimated that this year's inflation figure would reach double digits, while the government's economists predicted an 8 percent inflation rate.

Nathanson also foresaw a sharp hike of more than NIS 1 billion in the balance-of-payments deficit, saying it would reach NIS 9.4 billion next year.

Nathanson noted that a 12 percent inflation rate would make it very difficult for the economy to compete in international markets.

The main culprits behind this year's high inflation rate, Nathanson said, were sharp rises in housing and fruit and vegetable prices. The unemployment rate will remain steady at about 7.5 percent, he said.

Unlinked shekel interest rates will not change until the middle of the year and then go down, while the long-term interest rate will remain high, he said.

Propper: Policy prevents industry from taking full advantage of rise in exports

RACHEL NEIMAN

ALTHOUGH 1994 was a good year for the country's industry, it could have been an excellent one, Manufacturers Association President Dan Propper said yesterday.

Speaking at a Tel Aviv press conference, Propper said the economy's problem was due mainly to a poor balance of payment and export profitability.

The association's 1993 warning — repeated this year — concerning the gap in the balance of payment has continued to be ignored, he said.

"Given the 12.5 percent growth in exports, we could have had a [great] year," Propper said. Israel's industrial output grew by between 7.5 percent and 8 percent this year, real industrial investments rose 25 percent to 30 percent, and productivity went up by between 3.5 percent and 4 percent, the association said.

Employment also rose 4 percent. Operating profits for publicly traded industries fell to 8.9 percent from 9.3 percent last year.

Propper blamed government industries, "who are not structured in proper economic fashion," for a good part of market decline, despite increased exports.

The Manufacturer's Association said inflation this year would be between 13 percent-14 percent, as compared to a forecasted 8 percent-11 percent.



Manufacturers Association President Dan Propper is flanked by association economic committee chairman Yair Rot Levy (right) and association director-general Yoram Blizovsky at a press conference at Beit Sokolov yesterday.

Propper cited factors such as increased cost of raw materials, higher interest rates and municipal taxes and expenses such as water or electricity, "which are monopolistic and over whose price we have no control."

Other problems mentioned were increased taxation, erosion

of individual savings, public expenditures (which Propper suggested be cut by NIS 1 billion), escalating interest rates, and the decline in operating profits, "which could lead to recession."

Propper called for the Bank of Israel to "do its part by lowering interest rates so the gradient of

the crawling peg will be in real terms and in accordance with the rate of inflation."

The gradient should be 1 percent-2 percent higher than its present rate, said Propper, adding he feared the public might "run madly toward the dollar" if the matter was left unattended.

Farmers to get compensation for reducing sales of eggs, chickens

EVELYN GORDON

FARMERS who agree not to produce their quotas of eggs or raise chickens within the next 45 days will be eligible for enlarged compensation, according to regulations approved by the Knesset Finance Committee yesterday.

The poultry regulations state that in general, anyone who gives up his entire egg quota will be reimbursed at a rate of four agorot per egg, while those who give up their chicken production quotas will be reimbursed at the rate of 40 agorot per kilogram.

However, those who notify the poultry board of their willingness to give up their quotas within the next 45 days will be compensated at the rate of 14 agorot per egg or NIS 1.40 per kilogram of chicken.

In order to qualify for compensation, farmers must prove they no longer own equipment used to produce the eggs or raise the chickens. Those who produce eggs must

also show they have disposed of their hens. In addition, the farmer must sign a no-production commitment.

The poultry board is interested in eliminating 250 million eggs and 15,000 tons of chickens.

If farmers volunteer to destroy more than these amounts within the 45-day period, small farmers will be given preference in receiving the enlarged compensation, unless the large farmer in question is either a kibbutz or moshav.

New tax regulations approved for business cars

JOSE ROSENFELD

THE Knesset Finance Committee yesterday approved new tax regulations on business cars, to take effect January 1.

Under the change, the tax distinction between commercial and private cars of up to 3,500 kilograms will be eliminated, and the

business use of all vehicles will be subject to uniform tax treatment.

The committee approved two options for taxpayers applying for tax deductions for fixed and variable costs.

One option allows the business to deduct 25 percent of all expenditures from the first kilometer driven a year. The second option allows for a full deduction of all costs after the first 9,900 kilometers driven.

The first option will be attractive to businesses whose cars register a low kilometerage, while the second option will be worthwhile to businesses which make high usage of their cars.

The sale of a car that received business tax deductions will be subject to a capital gains tax.

Owners who purchased a commercial vehicle before January will be given a three-year transition period in which their fixed costs will be deductible.

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Jerusalem District Electricity Co. Ltd. TENDER No. 32/94 High Voltage Rubber Insulators 33 & 11kV

Bids are invited for the supply of high voltage rubber insulators, as detailed in the tender documents.

A copy of the specifications and conditions of tender can be obtained from the Secretary of Board of Directors, 15 Salah el-Din Street, East Jerusalem, Tel. 282335/6/7, until January 8, 1995.

Bids should be submitted not later than 12 noon on February 15, 1995.

MEY-EZOR-DAN Agricultural Cooperative Water Society Ltd. Tender 403/M.E.D.92 Supply and Erection of Control and Automation System for Soreq Biological Plant - Phase B

Mey-Ezor-Dan Agricultural Cooperative Water Society Ltd. invites contractors to submit bids for The Supply and Erection of Control and Automation System

The tender documents and forms of tender can be obtained between 8 a.m. and 2 p.m., against payment of NIS 500 (non-refundable) at the MEY-EZOR-DAN offices, 24 Nahalat Benyamin St., Tel Aviv, Tel. 03-5177144.

Bids should be submitted in two copies on the forms provided and in compliance with the conditions of the tender.

Bids, accompanied by a bank guarantee for US\$ 50,000 or the equivalent in New Israeli Shekels, as stated in the tender instructions, and valid for 120 days from the last day for submitting bids, must be placed in the tenders box not later than Jan. 31, 1995, at 12 noon. Bids should not be sent by mail. The envelope containing the bid should be marked: Mey-Ezor-Dan Agricultural Cooperative Water Society Ltd., Tender 403/M.E.D.92.

Bids arriving after closing time as mentioned, and bids submitted without the bank guarantee will not be considered. Bids may be submitted by manufacturers with qualifications and specialized experience, as specified in the tender documents. A pre-tender meeting and site visit for bidders will be held on Jan. 8, 1995 at 9 a.m. starting at the Mey-Ezor-Dan offices at the Soreq plant site. No undertaking is given to accept the lowest or any bid for the tender works or parts thereof.

Ben-Zion Moradov, Chairman
Mey-Ezor-Dan
Agricultural Cooperative Water Society Ltd.

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Deutsche Bank buys ITT finance business

NEW YORK (AP) — ITT Corp. will sell a big piece of its far-flung empire to the US arm of Deutsche Bank for about \$4 billion, the companies said in one of the biggest corporate deals announced this year.

The sale of ITT's commercial finance unit on Monday comes a week after the parent of the Sheraton Hotel chain arranged to buy Caesars World Inc. for \$1.7 billion in a major bid to boost its presence in gambling and entertainment.

ITT is one of the most diversified US companies, with operations that span eight industries. It once symbolized the American conglomerate because of its presence in everything from publishing to industrial pumps.

But in recent years ITT has sought to shrink its focus.

The company is selling ITT Commercial Finance to Deutsche Bank North America, the American subsidiary of Deutsche Bank AG.

ITT Commercial Finance loans money to distributors of products such as personal computers and motorcycles, a business known as asset-based lending.

Such loans, co-signed by the manufacturers, help the distributors expand their inventories of these products and sell them more efficiently.

For Deutsche Bank, the acquisition will quadruple its presence in asset-based loans to about \$5.1 billion, the company said.

Christiana Allaire, a spokeswoman for Deutsche Bank North America, said the cost of the purchase is \$4 billion.

ISRAELI MONEY MARKETS				
Patah (foreign currency deposit rates) (28.12.94)				
Currency (deposit for)	3 MONTHS	6 MONTHS	12 MONTHS	
U.S. dollar (\$250,000)	5.625	5.125	4.875	
Pound sterling (£100,000)	4.750	4.375	4.125	
German mark (DM 200,000)	4.250	4.000	3.750	
Swiss franc (SF 200,000)	3.125	2.875	2.625	
Yen (10 million yen)	0.750	0.675	0.600	
Shekel Foreign Exchange Rates* (27.12.94)				
CHECKS AND TRANSFERS				
Currency basket	Buy	Sell	Buy	Sell
U.S. dollar	3.2420	3.2520	2.96	3.0360
German mark	3.0164	3.0269	1.88	1.97
Pound sterling	1.9140	1.9409	4.56	4.78
French franc	4.6224	4.7291	0.54	0.57
Japanese yen (100)	0.5541	0.5619	0.24	0.25
Dutch guilder	3.0082	3.0495	2.95	3.0289
Swiss franc	1.7095	1.7298	1.68	1.76
Italian lira	2.2685	2.2985	2.22	2.31
Spanish peseta	0.4033	0.4089	0.40	0.41
Scandinavian krona	0.4389	0.4451	0.43	0.45
Danish krone	0.4882	0.4950	0.48	0.50
Finland mark	0.8520	0.8640	0.82	0.85
Canadian dollar	2.1538	2.1841	2.11	2.17
Australian dollar	2.3443	2.3774	2.28	2.31
S. African rand	0.9475	0.9589	0.91	0.96
Belgian franc (10)	0.9313	0.9444	0.91	0.96
Austrian schilling (10)	2.7155	2.7538	2.67	2.78
Italian lire (1000)	1.8578	1.8838	1.80	1.85
Jordanian dinar	—	—	0.86	0.91
Egyptian pound	—	—	4.19	4.30
Irish punt	3.8330	3.8903	—	—
Irish punt	4.3370	4.4027	—	—
Spanish peseta (100)	2.2554	2.2973	2.20	2.25
* These rates vary according to bank. — Bank of Israel.				
SOURCE: BANK LEUMI				

מכרזים ופיקוח

Appeals court returns points to Hapoel TA

HAPOEL Tel Aviv jumped from 10th to sixth place last night in the National Basketball League without taking a shot.

The Israel Basketball Association decided at a special court of appeals to return the club the four points which had been deducted some weeks ago for financial irregularities. Hapoel Tel Aviv (9-5), mired in 10th place with 19 points, is now tied for sixth with Hapoel Galil Elyon (9-5) and Bnei Herzliya (8-7) with 23 points apiece.

The Tel Aviv officials last night showed the IBA proof they had

JOEL GORDIN

reached an agreement with former player Haim Zlotnikman regarding payments owed. The three judges accepted the agreement.

Team manager Shaul Eisenberg enthused afterward, "Tomorrow I will get up early to look at the league table in the newspaper, just to see the club listed in its rightful place." Club chairman Shlomi Gruner was wary, rather than jubilant. Hapoel Tel Aviv, he explained, is not yet out of the financial woods and must still

find a way to repay Tomer Steinhauer nearly \$700,000. For starters, fans have been asked to make contributions. "Every little bit helps," he commented.

National Basketball League

	W	L	Pts.
1. Maccabi Tel Aviv	12	3	29
2. Maccabi Rishon	12	3	27
3. Hapoel Eilat	10	5	25
4. Hapoel Jerusalem	9	6	24
5. Hapoel Holon	9	6	24
6. Hapoel Galil Elyon	9	5	23
7. Hapoel Tel Aviv	9	5	23
8. Bnei Herzliya	8	7	23
9. Maccabi Jerusalem	8	7	22
10. Maccabi Ramat Gan	5	10	20
11. Hapoel Haifa	4	11	19
12. Hapoel Giv'at	3	12	18
13. Hapoel Giv'at	2	13	17
14. Bnei Ramat Gan	0	15	15

Morocco, Tunisia will take part in 15th Hapoel Games

HEATHER CHAIT

"THE road to Atlanta '96 passes through the Hapoel Games '95," claim the organizers for next year's 15th Hapoel Games which promises to be the most glittering since its inception in 1928.

"In the current peace framework between Israel and her neighboring states, I believe this will be a memorable event," said Hapoel chairman Yoram Oberkowitz at a press conference yesterday.

Athletes from Morocco and Tunisia have already confirmed their participation in the 15-nation tournament, and Oberkowitz hopes that Egypt and Jordan will make their debuts.

For the first time, sportsmen from China and Cuba will participate in the NIS 8 million event which includes 23 disciplines at venues throughout the country from judo in Jerusalem to boxing in Rehovot to sailing in Nahariya.

The European Weightlifting Championships (un-

til 21) will be held in Beersheba with entrants from Greece, Hungary and Israel. Greece is sending Panayiotis Antonopolis, who set a world record in the 83kg category with a lift of 230kg.

Other outstanding visitors will be Russian swimmer Alex Popov with a world record time of 48.21 seconds in the 100m. Hungary's Kristina Agresey, who took three golds at the 1992 Barcelona Olympics, will be the name to beat among the women swimmers.

America's women gymnastics team seems set to startle with Shannon Miller - current world and Barcelona champion - having the edge on Dominique Doz, USA champion for 1994.

The spectacular opening ceremony will be held at the Ramat Gan Stadium on June 12 with the curtain going down at the Caesarea amphitheater five days later.

Aussies tighten grip on England

MELBOURNE (Reuters) - Leg spinner Shane Warne routed England by grabbing six wickets as Australia took a firm grip on the second Ashes Test yesterday.

Australia leads the tourists by 237 runs with seven wickets in hand at close of play on the third day at the Melbourne Cricket Ground.

Warne, who tormented the English batsmen during Australia's decisive victory in last month's first Test, once again dashed the tourists' hopes.

After taking three wickets on Monday, Warne doubled his tally by removing Alec Stewart, wicketkeeper Steve Rhodes and seamer Phil DeFreitas to finish with figures of six for 64 from 27.4 overs.

Resuming at 148 for four in reply to Australia's first innings of 279, England collapsed to 212 all out, losing its last six wickets for the addition of 64 runs.

They endured the worst possi-

ble start when Graham Gooch lofted the first ball of the day straight back to fast bowler Craig McDermott.

Australia, leading by 67 runs on first innings, consolidated its advantage by reaching 170 for three at the close. Number three batsman David Boon was on 64 in partnership with Michael Bevan, who was three not out.

With two days remaining and the pitch expected to deteriorate further, England faces a grim battle to save the match.

Warne's haul took his tally of Test wickets past 150 in only his 31st appearance for his country. Fifty of those have come in eight Tests against England.

McDermott also achieved a personal milestone, becoming Australia's second highest wicket-taker in Test history when he removed Darren Gough for 20. It took his tally to 249 with only pace bowler Dennis Lillee ahead of him on 355.

Australia's bowling performance illustrated how much captain Mark Taylor has relied on Warne and McDermott. Spinner Tim May is the only other bowler who has taken an English wicket during three innings.

Taylor and fellow opener Michael Slater took a cautious approach in their bid to extend Australia's lead. Taylor fell for 19 when he was trapped leg before wicket by Gooch, then Slater was deceived by spinner Phil Tufnell.

Charging down the wicket, he was beaten by Tufnell's turn and flight to be comprehensively stumped for 44.

Mark Waugh, caught and bowled by Gooch, was the only other Australian casualty with his score on 29.

Disappointed England team boss Keith Fletcher said: "We had to be positive but the odd player committing suicide didn't help us and I'm not happy that we were bowled out so quickly."

Australia first innings 279

(S. Waugh 84 not out, M. Waugh 71, D. Gough four for 60)

England 148 for four

M. Atherton lbw Warne 44
A. Stewart c & b Warne 23
G. Hick c Healy b McDermott 21
S. Rhodes c M. Waugh b Warne 15
G. Gooch c & b McDermott 15
M. Gatting c S. Waugh b Warne 9
D. Gough c Healy b McDermott 20
S. Rhodes c M. Waugh b Warne 0
P. DeFreitas at Healy b Warne 11
P. Tufnell not out 11
P. Tufnell run out 9
Extras (b-7 nb-2) 9
Total 212
Fall of wickets: 1-40, 2-119, 3-124, 4-140, 5-148, 6-151, 7-185, 8-189, 9-207.
Bowling: McDermott 24-6-72-3 (nb-2), Fleming 11-5-30-0, M. Waugh 3-1-11-0, Warne 27-4-64-6, May 18-5-28-0.
Warne retired hurt with the score at 10 for no wicket in the seventh over, and returned at 151 for six in the seventy-second over.

Australia second innings 19

M. Taylor lbw Gough 19
M. Slater at Rhodes b Tufnell 44
D. Boon not out 29
M. Waugh c & b Gough 24
M. Bevan not out 3
Extras (b-1 lb-5 nb-5) 11
Total (for three wickets) 170
Fall of wickets: 1-61 2-81 3-157
Bowling: Maccabi 12-2-44-0 (nb-1), DeFreitas 18-2-41-0 (nb-2), Tufnell 27-6-41-1 (nb-2), Gough 14-3-53-2, Hick 3-2-5-0.

Winter Youth soccer tourney begins today

DEREK FATTAL

SOCCER fans get the chance to spot the Gheorghe Hagi, Eric Cantona and Ronnie Rosenzals of the future, with the opening of the 20th annual Winter International Youth Soccer tournament that kicks off this afternoon in Ashkelon.

The action begins at noon with the Israeli juniors' (under-16) clash against France.

Junior team coach Avraham Bahar has high hopes for his side, which has a nucleus of youngsters who have already played some 15 matches together. Nevertheless, the French should provide a difficult test for the hosts.

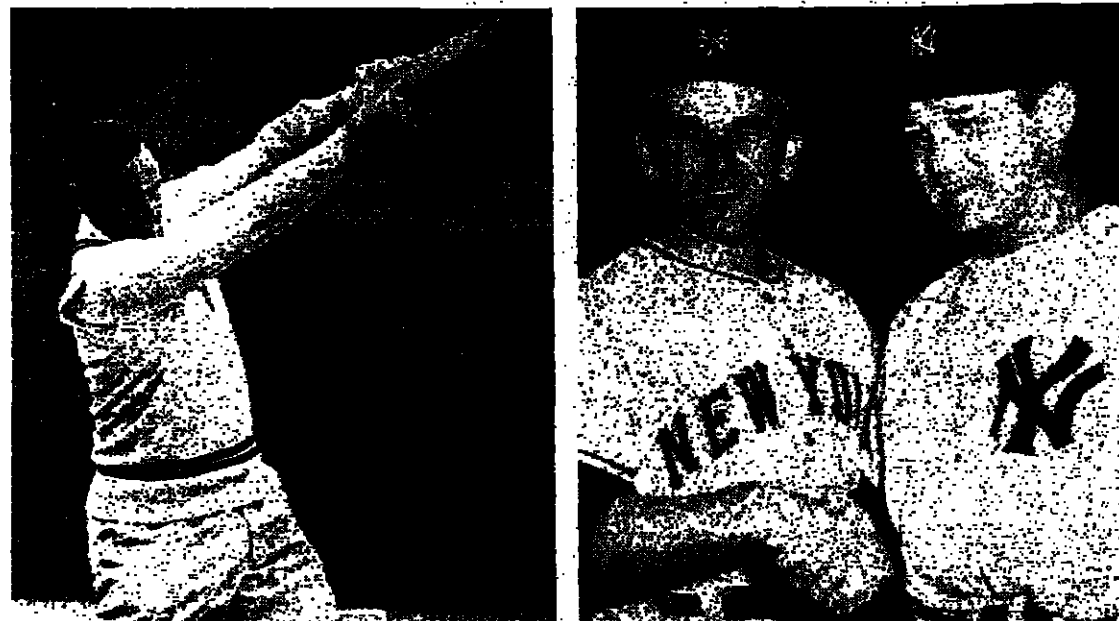
The Youth squad (under-18), begins its campaign in Lod against Romania at 2 p.m. Israel coach Gigi Cohen has introduced seven new players into a squad based on the team which carried off last year's juniors' title.

Other contestants in the Youth section are Switzerland, Greece and Hungary.

In other soccer news yesterday, peace was temporarily restored to troubled Hapoel Haifa, following a reconciliation between Tal Babin and coach Dror Kashtan.

Babin has been reinstated as club captain and Kashtan continues at the helm. Whether the truce holds is likely to be dictated by results on the field.

Having secured the services of super striker Alon Mizrahi until the end of the season, Ironi Ashdod is aiming to have the player cleared by the Israel Football Association in time to play in its weekend fixture against Maccabi Petah Tikva.



Peter May (l) connects; Allie Reynolds (r) shakes hands with Dave Koslo of the NY Giants on opening day of the 1951 World Series.

World mourns cricketer May, Yankees hurler Reynolds

LITROP (AP) - Peter May, One of England's finest batsmen and respected cricket officials, died yesterday after a short illness, at age 64.

Scorer of 4,537 runs in 66 Tests between 1951-61, the Surrey batsman was one of England's most successful captains even though he quit Test cricket comparatively early at 31 and retired from the game two years later because of business commitments.

Although he quit playing, May continued to serve English cricket in many capacities, as a selector and chairman of selectors, and as president of the MCC (Marylebone Cricket Club) in 1980-81.

May scored 138 on his Test debut against South Africa at Headingley in 1951 and in all 13 Test hundreds. His highest score was the 285 not out he made against the West Indies at Edgbaston in 1957.

He captained England for a record 41 Tests, winning 20 and losing 10. In his first-class career, from 1948-63, he totaled 27,592 runs at an average of 51.00, including 85 centuries.

Allie Reynolds, a star right-handed pitcher on six World Series champion teams with the New York Yankees from 1947-54, died just before midnight Monday in Stillwater, Oklahoma after a long bout with cancer. He was 77.

Reynolds, 182-107 with 49 saves and 3.30 ERA in 13 years in the majors with Cleveland and New York, had two no-hitters in 1951 and went 20-8 in 1952 when he led the American League with a 2.06 ERA, 160 strikeouts and six shutouts.

He was 7-2 with four saves and a 2.79 ERA in 15 World Series games, going 2-1 in the Yankees' seven-game victory over Brooklyn in 1952. He won the deciding game at Ebbets Field that year in relief.

Reynolds, acquired from the Indians in a trade after the 1946 season, was 19-8 with a league-best .704 winning percentage in 1947. He later coached at his alma mater Oklahoma State.

Vikings capture NFC Central



MINNEAPOLIS (AP) - No

Warren Moon. Not much Steve Young or Jerry Rice. Just a lot of backups and a lot of defense, and that was enough to give Minnesota the NFC Central championship Monday night.

Rookie Dewayne Washington returned a fumble for a touchdown and John Randle had two of the Vikings three sacks in a 21-14 victory over San Francisco, snapping the 49ers 10-game winning streak.

In the final game of the regular season, Minnesota (10-6) clinched its second division title in coach Dennis Green's three years. It did so without Moon, the Pro Bowl quarterback who sat out with a knee injury.

The Vikings also did it with their most inspired defensive per-

formance in weeks against a San Francisco offense that relied on reserves in the second half. Minnesota now will play host to Chicago in a first-round playoff game Sunday.

The 49ers (13-3) are guaranteed home-field advantage throughout the NFC playoffs, and will take next weekend off.

FINAL STANDINGS

AMERICAN CONFERENCE

	W	L	T	Pct.	Pt.	Pt.
*Miami	10	6	0	.625	38	37
*New England	10	6	0	.625	31	32
Indianapolis	8	8	0	.500	30	30
Buffalo	7	9	0	.438	30	30
NY Jets	8	10	0	.455	29	30

*clinched division

NATIONAL CONFERENCE

	W	L	T	Pct.	Pt.	Pt.
*Dallas	12	4	0	.750	41	44
NY Giants	9	7	0	.563	29	30
Arizona	8	8	0	.500	25	27
Philadelphia	7	9	0	.438	30	30
Washington	9	7	0	.563	27	30

*clinched playoff spot

Central

	W	L	T	Pct.	Pt.	Pt.
*Pittsburgh	12	4	0	.750	31	34
*Cleveland	11	5	0	.688	34	34
Chicago	3	13	0	.188	27	40
Indianapolis	2	14	0	.125	23	32

*clinched division

West

	W	L	T	Pct.	Pt.	Pt.
*San Diego	11	5	0	.688	31	30
*Kansas City	9	7	0	.563	31	30
LA Raiders	8	7	0	.538	30	32
Denver	7	9	0	.438	34	35
Seattle	6	10	0	.375	28	32

*clinched playoff spot

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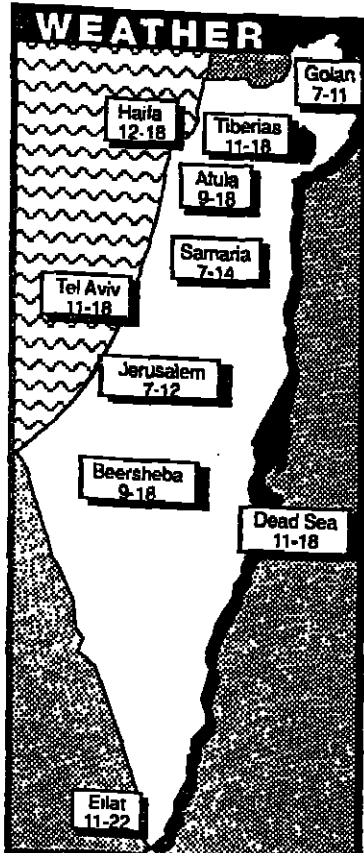
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AROUND THE WORLD

City	Low	High	Wind	Clouds	Notes
Amsterdam	10	15	11	52	rain
Berlin	10	15	11	52	rain
Buenos Aires	10	15	11	52	rain
Chicago	10	15	11	52	rain
Frankfurt	10	15	11	52	rain
Geneva	10	15	11	52	rain
Helsinki	10	15	11	52	rain
Hong Kong	10	15	11	52	rain
London	10	15	11	52	rain
Los Angeles	10	15	11	52	rain
Madrid	10	15	11	52	rain
Moscow	10	15	11	52	rain
Munich	10	15	11	52	rain
Paris	10	15	11	52	rain
Rome	10	15	11	52	rain
Stockholm	10	15	11	52	rain

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Jerusalem: Rina Pharm, 31 David Yellin, 383788; Balsam, Salah e-Din, 272315; Shufat, Shufat Road, 810108; Dar Alidawa, Herod's Gate, 282058.
Tel Aviv: Ben-Yehuda, 142 Ben-Yehuda, 522-3535; Afanessan, 110 Yehuda Halevi, 561-3010. Till 3 a.m. Thursday: Ben-Yehuda, 142 Ben-Yehuda, 5223535. Till midnight: Superpharm Ramat Aviv, 40 Einsteim, 6413730. Ra'anana-Kfar Sava: Hadar, 12 Habanim, Hod Hasharon, 558472. Netanya: Cial Pharm, 60 Sd. Binayamin, 388091.
Kiryat area: Neveh Haim, 77 Moche Sharet, Kiryat Haim, 728002.
Haifa: Kiryat Elizer, 6 Mayerhoff Sq., 511707.
Herzliya: Cial Pharm, Beit Merkazim, 6 Maskit (cfr. Sderot Hagalim), Herzliya Pituah, 558472. 558407. Open 9 a.m. to midnight.
Upper Nazareth: Cial Pharm, Lev Ha'ir Mall, 570458. Open 9 a.m. to 10 p.m.

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Jerusalem: Shara Zedek (Internal, ophthalmology, ENT); Hadassah Ein Kerem (surgery, obstetrics); Hadassah Mt. Scopus (orthopedics); Silur Holim (pediatrics). In case of heart attack, attempted resuscitation, snake bite or scorpion sting, go immediately to nearest hospital.
Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv Medical Center (pediatrics, internal, surgery). Netanya: Laniado.

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FIRST AID 101

Magen David Adom
In emergencies dial 101 (Hebrew) or 911 (English) in most parts of the country. In addition:
Ashdod: 561333 Karmiel: 989555
Ashkelon: 551332 Kfar Sava: 902222
Bat Yam: 551111 Kiryat Shmona: 944334
Beer Sheva: 270787 K. Shimon: 944334
Beit Shimon: 523133 Nahariya: 912233
Dan Region: 578233 Netanya: 622333
Haifa: 551223 Rehovot: 451333
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video hotlines for battered women 02-514111, 03-5461133 (also in Russian), 07-376310, 08-550506 (also in Amharic).
Rape Crisis Center (24 hours), Tel Aviv 5234819, 5448191 (men), Jerusalem 514455, Haifa 660111, Eilat 31977.
The National Poison Control Center at Rambam Hospital 04-525205, for emergency calls 24 hours a day, for information in case of poisoning.

CRITIC'S CHOICE

ENGLISH THEATER

HELEN KAYE

TENNESSEE Williams's women face the passing of the world as they knew it or wanted to see it with a defiant, gay courage. His tender and funny *A Lovely Sunday for Creve Coeur* tells the story of one day in the life of four women "of a certain age" in St. Louis in the '30s. Creve Coeur is an amusement park where Bodey (Malvina Shaltiel) intends to go on a picnic with her date-mate Dorothea (Donna Bechar), but things intervene. The production is directed by Maxine Ray for the Sharon Players. Tonight at Saphir Auditorium in Kfar Sava at 8:30

THEATER

HELEN KAYE

THERE'S a new production from the dynamite Geshet Theater. It's Gorki's *The Lower Depths* which tells the story of a bunch of dead-beats and down-and-outers. Director Yevgeny Arye gives a new look to an old classic. At the Geshet Theater in Old Jaffa tonight at 8:30. (Hebrew)

CLASSICAL MUSIC

MICHAEL AJZENSTADT

THE Israel Camerata Rehovot's vocal series continues with Avner Itai on the podium leading the orchestra in two Bach cantatas with the Kibbutz Artzi Choir and three soloists: soprano Sivan Rotem, tenor Andreas Schulst and bass Wolf Matthias Friedrich. Also on the program is a Vivaldi concerto in A minor for two violins with Arnold Kobliansky and Yury Glukhovsky as soloists. Tomorrow at the Wix Auditorium in Rehovot and Friday and Saturday at the Tel Aviv Museum. Starting at 8.30 p.m., except on Friday at 2 p.m.

Tonight (8) at the Jerusalem Rubin Music Academy, duo pianists Laurence and Daniel Benzakoun perform a recital of music by Brahms, Rachmaninov and Ravel.

OPERA

MICHAEL AJZENSTADT

THE Temple in Jerusalem will be completely destroyed by the attacking armed forces of the Babylonians as the New Israeli Opera tomorrow (8 p.m.) premieres its new production of *Nabucco*. Giuseppe Verdi's so-called "Jewish opera." This is not one of Verdi's grandest masterpieces, but it is the opera that made him truly famous. Daniel Oren returns to Israel after a 15-

JERUSALEM
CINEMATHEQUE They Call Me Eternity 7 * Salem Bombay 9:30 * The Gospel According to Saint Matthew 9:30 G.G. Jerusalem Mail (Mishal) 7:58:44
Interview With the Vampire*The Specialist 4:30, 7:15, 9:45 * The Real McCoy 4:30, 7:30 * Timecop 4:30, 7:30 * Forrest Gump 4:30, 7:30, 9:45 * The River Wild 4:30, 7:30, 9:45 * JERUSALEM THEATRE Lifestories 8:30 * Germaine G. ORION True Lies/Clear and Present Danger 4:45, 6:45, 9:15 * The Client 5:15, 7:15 * Priscilla Beatty and the Chastity 5:15, 7:30, 9:45 RAV-CHEN 1-7 7:27:09 Credit Card Reservations 7:27:44 Rav-Mecher Building, 18 Ha'oman St. Telport Chassers*The Siren's Song*Mother's Boys 5:30, 9:45 * Four Weddings and a Funeral 5:30, 9:45 * Pulp Fiction 4, 7, 9:45 * Renaissance Man 5, 7:15, 9:45 RON 1-2 2:24:04 Rabbi Akiva St. Bad Girls*When a Man Loves a Woman 5, 7:15, 9:30
TEL AVIV
CINEMATHEQUE Citizen Kane 7 * Farinelli 481 9:30 DEKL 5 5443200 94 Yehuda Hameasabi St. It Could Happen To You 7:30, 9:45 DIZENGOFF 1-3 200485 Dizingoff Center Gilbert Grape 11 a.m., 1, 3, 5:15, 7:30, 9:45 * Reserve Dogs 11 a.m., 1, 3, 5:15, 7:30, 9:45 * The Siren's Song*The Color of the Night 5:30, 9:45 * Four Weddings and a Funeral 5:30, 9:45 * Angels 5, 7:15
BAT YAM
RAY-CHEN 5531077 Interview with the Vampire*The Real McCoy*The Specialist 5:15, 7:15, 9:45 * Chassers*The Siren's Song*The Color of the Night 5:30, 9:45 * Four Weddings and a Funeral 5:30, 9:45 * Angels 5, 7:15
BEERSHEVA
G.G. GIL Interview With the Vampire 4:30, 7:30, 9:45 * The River Wild*The Real McCoy 4:30, 7:30, 9:45 * Forrest Gump 4:30, 7:30, 9:45 RAV-NEGEV 1-4 2:25:278 G.G. GIL Interview With the Vampire 4:30, 7:30, 9:45 * Four Weddings and a Funeral 5:30, 9:45 * The Color of the Night 5:30, 9:45 * Serial Mom 5, 7:30, 9:45
DIMONA
MOFET The Specialist 8
HADARA
LEV 1-4 343555 The River Wild 5, 7:15, 9:45 * The Lion King (English dialogue) 7:30, 9:45 * Baby's Day Out 5, 7:30, 9:45 * The Siren's Song 5, 7:30, 9:45 * Forrest Gump 7, 9:45 * Baby's Day Out 5, 7:30, 9:45
HERZLIYA
COLONY CINEMA 1-2 (MANDARIN) 5:30, 9:45 * Forrest Gump 7:30, 10:15 * Four Weddings and a Funeral 7:30, 10:15 * Interview With the Vampire 7:30, 10:15 * The River Wild 7:30, 10:15
HOD HASHARON
MOFET 405616 The Color of the Night 7:15, 9:30
KARMIEL
CINEMA 1-3 887277 Timecop 7, 9:30 * Pulp Fiction/Forrest Gump 6:30, 9:15
Kfar Sava
G.G. GIL Interview With the Vampire*Four Weddings and a Funeral*The Color of the Night 4:45, 7:15, 9:45 * Forrest Gump 4:45, 7:15, 10 * The River Wild 4:45, 7:15, 9:45 * The Real McCoy 7:30, 9:45 * Angels 4:45, 7:15 * Schindler's List 4
Kiryat Bialik
G.G. KIRYON 1-9 778168 Interview With the Vampire*Forrest Gump 4:45, 7, 9:30 * The River Wild 4:45, 7, 9:30 * The Real McCoy 4:45, 7, 9:30 * Monkey Trouble/The Mask/Baby's Day Out/The Lion King 4:45 * The Specialist/Four Weddings and a Funeral 7, 9:30
Kiryat Malachi
HAKIRYA The Specialist 7:30, 9:30



Yevgeny Arye directs the Geshet Theater in Gorki's 'The Lower Depths.'

year absence to lead this production directed by Gianfranco de Bosio with a stellar cast starring Leo Nucci in the lead, Ferruccio Furlanetto as Zaccaria the high priest, and Ghena Dimitrova as Abigail. Through January 21 at the Tel Aviv Performing Arts Center.

TELEVISION

PENNY STARR

IT'S tucked away at 6 p.m. on Channel 2, so you may not have seen *The Guys Next Door*. But teens in the know should be clued in to the five young bumpy stars of the comedy show. They sing, they dance, they act, they have floppy haircuts and they're even quite funny (especially the superhero Pizza Guy).

There's more American culture later on cable Channel 3. *Cheers* at 9:45 p.m. has become a comedy classic, and *Models Inc.* typifies the shallow but stunning-looking inhabitants of Hollywood. Check out the culture couture and ogle the bods at 10:10 p.m.

CINEMA

KIRYAT ONO
MATNAT The Specialist 7, 9:15 * The Lion King (Hebrew dialogue) 5 MOFET 1 Love Trouble 7:15, 9:30
LOD
STAR Timecop 7:15, 9:30 * Natural Born Killers 7:15, 9:30 * The Specialist 7:15, 9:30
NAHARIYA
HECHAL HATARBUT 1 Love Trouble 9:15
NESS ZIONA
G.G. GIL 1-4 404729 Interview With the Vampire 4:45, 7:15, 9:45 * The Real McCoy/The River Wild 4:45, 7:15, 9:45 * Forrest Gump 4:30, 7, 9:45
NETANYA
G.G. GIL 1-5 628452 The River Wild*Interview With the Vampire*The Real McCoy 5, 7:15, 9:45 * Forrest Gump 4:30, 7, 9:45 * RAV-CHEN 1-4 618570 Pulp Fiction 4, 7, 9:45 * Chassers 5, 7:30, 9:45 * Renaissance Man 5, 7:15, 9:45 * Four Weddings and a Funeral 5:30, 9:45 * Angels 5, 7:15
OR YEHUDA
G.G. GIL The Color of the Night*The Flying Carpet/Sirens 5, 7:15, 9:45 * Angels 5, 7:15, 9:45
PETAH TIKVA
G.G. GIL 1-5 630084 Interview With the Vampire 5, 7:15, 9:45 * The Real McCoy 7:15, 9:45 * The River Wild 5, 7:15, 9:45 * G. RAM 1-3 5940818 Forrest Gump 4:30, 7, 9:45 * Natural Born Killers 7:15, 9:45 * The Color of the Night 5, 7:15, 9:45
RA'ANANA
PARK Four Weddings and a Funeral 10 * Interview With the Vampire 7:30, 10 * Renaissance Man 5, 7:30, 10 * Baby's Day Out 5 * Gilbert Grape 5, 7:30, 10 * Angels 5, 7:30
RAMAT GAN
RAV-GAN 1-4 797121 Four Weddings and a Funeral/Renaissance Man 5, 7:15, 9:45 * The Siren's Song 5, 7:30, 9:45 * Forrest Gump 7, 9:45 * Angels 5 RAV-OASIS 1-3 673087 Interview With the Vampire 5, 7:15, 9:45 * The Real McCoy/The River Wild 5, 7:30, 9:45
RISHON LEZION
HAZAHAV Interview With the Vampire 4:45, 7:15, 9:45 * Forrest Gump 4:30, 7, 9:45 * Angels 4:45, 7:15, 9:45 * Baby's Day Out 7:15, 9:45 * Chassers 5:30, 9:45 * Pulp Fiction 4, 7, 9:45 * Four Weddings and a Funeral 5, 7:30, 9:45 * Renaissance Man 5, 7:15, 9:45
RISHON LEZION
GAL 1-5 981989 The River Wild*The Real McCoy/The Specialist/Timecop 4:45, 7:15, 9:45 * The River Wild 4:45, 7:15, 9:45 * The Siren's Song 7:15, 9:45 * Priscilla 7:15, 9:45 * The Client 9:45 * Speed 7:15
UPPER NAZARETH
G.G. GIL The Color of the Night*The Specialist 4:45, 7, 9:30 * The River Wild*The Real McCoy/Interview With the Vampire 4:45, 7, 9:30 * Forrest Gump 4, 7, 9:45
* Tone phone reservations 03-5252244
* Hours are p.m. unless otherwise indicated.

TELEVISION

CHANNEL 1
6:30 News 8:45 Cartoon 7:00 Good Morning Israel

EDUCATIONAL TV
8:00 Heart Beat - documentary series on ethnic music around the world 8:30 Arithmetic 8:55 Pioneer Israeli History 9:10 English: Candy Can Do It 9:25 Pretty Butterfly 9:47 Just Say No 10:00 Morning Talk with Beya Barak 10:30 Children's current affairs 11:00 Judaism: Keshet v'anani 11:20 Literature 12:00 Life Sciences - the human body 12:10 Nature and Science (Arabic) 12:20 English: Radio Fever 12:45 Science and Technology 13:30 Korp Fit 14:00 Cartoons 14:15 Animal tales 14:30 Moomins 15:00 Zombit

CHANNEL 1
15:30 Three, Four, Five and a Half 16:00 Zap to One 17:00 A New Evening 17:35 What D'you Say 18:00 Rutgers 18:15 News in English

ARABIC PROGRAMS
18:30 The Four Seasons - ecology magazine 19:00 News in Arabic

HEBREW PROGRAMS
19:30 The Siren's Song 19:50 Hebrew language corner 20:00 Mabat 21:00 Conference Call - with Nissim Mishal 21:25 As Time Goes By 22:05 The Mediator - Documentary about the 1948 murder of UN diplomat Count Bernadotte in Jerusalem 22:05 Grace Under Fire 23:30 News 00:00 Love At First Sight

CHANNEL 2
14:00 Bridge to Terabithia - fantasy drama 15:00 Cartoons 15:05 The Wind in the Willows 15:30 Conan cartoon, adventure and science fiction series 16:00 The Bold and the Beautiful 17:00 Reshet 17:15 Action - cinema program 18:00 Guys Next Door 18:30 Paradise Beach 19:00 Style Magazine 19:30 Who's the Boss 20:00 News 20:30 It's a Deal - game show 21:00 hche - comedy with Sam Rivlin 21:30 Live - Dan Shilon Hosts 22:00 Film: The Indecent Woman (1989) - Erotic drama about a successful musician, wife and mother who meets a man who arouses in her erotic passion, but they do not stop at acting out their sexual fantasies 00:00 Special Programs (continued)

JORDAN TV (unofficial)
17:00 French programs 18:30 News in French 19:00 News in Hebrew 19:15 Battistone Galactica 19:30 Coach 19:35 Coach 20:00 Life in the Freezer (documentary) 20:30 Quantum Leap 21:10 Law and Order 22:00 News in English 22:20 Snowy River 23:30 Coming of Age

MIDDLE EAST TV
14:00 The 700 Club 14:55 Film: Zorro at the Court of Spain - masked avenger 15:25 The 700 Club 15:30 The 700 Club 15:35 The 700 Club 15:40 The 700 Club 15:45 The 700 Club 15:50 The 700 Club 15:55 The 700 Club 16:00 The 700 Club 16:05 The 700 Club 16:10 The 700 Club 16:15 The 700 Club 16:20 The 700 Club 16:25 The 700 Club 16:30 The 700 Club 16:35 The 700 Club 16:40 The 700 Club 16:45 The 700 Club 16:50 The 700 Club 16:55 The 700 Club 17:00 The 700 Club 17:05 The 700 Club 17:10 The 700 Club 17:15 The 700 Club 17:20 The 700 Club 17:25 The 700 Club 17:30 The 700 Club 17:35 The 700 Club 17:40 The 700 Club 17:45 The 700 Club 17:50 The 700 Club 17:55 The 700 Club 18:00 The 700 Club 18:05 The 700 Club 18:10 The 700 Club 18:15 The 700 Club 18:20 The 700 Club 18:25 The 700 Club 18:30 The 700 Club 18:35 The 700 Club 18:40 The 700 Club 18:45 The 700 Club 18:50 The 700 Club 18:55 The 700 Club 19:00 The 700 Club 19:05 The 700 Club 19:10 The 700 Club 19:15 The 700 Club 19:20 The 700 Club 19:25 The 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Justice Ministry may support imposition of organization tax

DAN IZENBERG

A JUSTICE Ministry spokesman said yesterday the government would reconsider its opposition to proposals for an organization tax law after its initiators agreed to add provisions to make the legislation more democratic.

The ministry has opposed the legislation until now on the grounds that it violates human rights by seeking to oblige citizens to contribute to a voluntary organization.

The Knesset Labor and Social Affairs Committee yesterday discussed proposals for an organization tax law submitted by Tamar Gozansky (OFPE) and Yigal Bibi (NRP).

Committee chairman Yossi Katz insisted that the proposal include provisions enabling citizens to refuse to join a worker's organization; cancel their membership or switch organizations; that they be guaranteed specific benefits by the organizations; and that the organizations be democratically run. Bibi later told The

Jerusalem Post he agreed to Katz's amendments.

Justice Ministry representative Dan Orenstein said the ministry would study the proposal in light of the proposed changes.

The organization tax would provide a source of funding for workers' federations which until now have received a portion of the Kupat Holim Clalit health tax collected by the Histadrut. The health tax will be canceled on January 1 when the National Health Insurance Law goes into effect.

The National Health Insurance Law originally included a provision stating that it would only be implemented after an organization tax law was passed. However, the Justice Ministry decided that such a tax would breach the basic right of freedom of choice.

The Histadrut also appeared to lose interest in the tax after deciding to find alternative funding in

the framework of negotiations with the government and private sector employers on a new economic package deal.

Such a deal would exclude Histadrut Hapoel Hamizrahi, which for the past 70 years has had a financial arrangement with the Histadrut and Kupat Holim Clalit. "It is inconceivable to have a society without organizations representing the workers," said Bibi. "I supported the National Health Law on the basis of the promise that an organization tax law would be passed along with it."

Gozansky said "the right to union organization was a basic human right."

Histadrut Trade Union chief Amir Peretz indicated that the Histadrut would not oppose organization tax legislation. Peretz's statement was the first indication the Histadrut would not fight the initiative since Histadrut Chairman Haim Ramon began speaking out against it.

A-G asked to comment on bill banning non-kosher meat imports

EVELYN GORDON

ATTORNEY-GENERAL Michael Ben-Yair will be asked to relate to several issues involving a bill to ban nonkosher meat imports, in a move that is likely to delay the bill for another few days.

Meanwhile, MK Naomi Chazan (Meretz) has claimed that a change made to the bill in the Economics Committee is a "new issue," which means the House Committee must decide whether the clause can, in fact, be added. This will also delay the bill's passage.

The government is eager to have the bill passed by January 1, due to pressure from the religious parties, especially Shas. On this date, the Industry and Trade Ministry is slated to give out licenses to would-be meat importers, and due to High Court of Justice rulings on the subject, it says it can see no legal means to deny permits to importers of non-kosher meats.

Originally, Labor had hoped to pass the bill yesterday, but it is

now aiming for tomorrow. Economics Committee chairman Gideon Patt (Likud) agreed to try to finish the bill by then, though he warned that he did not want to enact a hasty law which would then be overturned by the High Court.

Both Chazan and Patt want Ben-Yair's opinion on certain aspects of the bill before proceeding - in particular, a clause saying the bill will take effect despite the Basic Law: Freedom of Occupation and the Basic Law: Human Dignity and Freedom.

Originally, the bill mentioned only the former. Since this Basic Law contains a clause allowing it to be overridden for any purpose by 61 MKs, this is clearly legal. However, the Chief Rabbinate asked that the bill mention the Human Dignity and Freedom law as well, to forestall any court challenge to the bill based on this law.

This law can be overridden

only for an "appropriate purpose in accordance with Israel's values as a Jewish and democratic state," and only to the minimal degree necessary - and both Patt and Chazan say they have doubts as to whether the bill meets these criteria.

"[Also], I demand that the attorney-general come and explain to the committee how this bill preserves the status quo," Chazan said. "In my opinion, this is a violation of the status quo."

Until now, certain types of nonkosher meat could legally be imported.

Chazan also claimed "new issue" on an amendment to prevent the import of nonkosher meat from Gaza and Jericho as well as from overseas. Abdul Wahab Darawshe (DAP) supported her, saying this would infringe on implementation of the Cairo Agreement.

Chazan's objections elicited angry reactions from Labor party members.

"I'm not willing for Labor MKs to submit to coalition discipline while Meretz MKs do whatever they please!" said Avi Yehzekel (Labor) during the Economics Committee meeting.

Tax men net drug rehab chief

RAINE MARCUS

THE director of a drug rehabilitation center suspected of tax evasion was released on NIS 300,000 bail by Tel Aviv Magistrate's Court yesterday.

Shlomo Irenstein, 34, of Bnei Brak, director of the Geshet Le-haim non-profit association, was arrested on Monday by the tax authorities' investigations department, as part of a nationwide crackdown on tax evaders. Investigators said in court that Irenstein failed to pay NIS 376,269, excluding interest and cost of living charges, from May 1990 to April 1993.

Under questioning, Irenstein reportedly admitted failing to pay taxes but said he had no criminal intention and that his organization exists "from hand to mouth."



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Jews arrive from Chechnya

BAT SHEVA TSUR

"GROZNY is in flames. The local population has barricaded the streets against the Russians and the only way to escape is by foot at night," new immigrants who left Chechnya said here last night.

They were speaking at Ben-Gurion Airport after a special flight, organized by the Jewish Agency, brought them from the North Caucasus to safety.

Another 60 Jews who have escaped from the Chechen capital are expected to arrive here within a week, said Baruch Gur, head of the agency's CIS department.

Beary-eyed, bewildered and exhausted, the 32 new immigrants climbed off the flight last night with only a few small parcels. They admitted they had originally hoped to remain in Grozny to save their possessions but "it became unbearable."

Two of the arrivals, who had left Grozny after the Russian invasion, described the terror and vandalism on the road to safety.

"The temperature was minus 15 degrees and we made our way on foot across the bombed-out cars and makeshift barricades set up by the local population on the highways. Russian tanks were rolling through the streets and shooting indiscriminately at homes and people. Every 100 meters we had to bribe another militia to let us pass," said Vladimir Israilov, a 43-year-old graphic artist.

He said that only after two nights of crossing over icy hills together with his wife, Svetlana, and daughter, Alberta, 7, did they reach the safety of a village in Ossetia. Some of the refugees were so desperate to leave that they were buying antiquated armored vehicles with their savings, Israilov said.

"The Russians told us that there was free passage for refugees but the first group who tried to leave were all shot. Relations with the Moslems improved greatly when the tension with the Russians mounted," Svetlana Israilov, a doctor, said. The Chechens, she added, were putting up a strong resistance and "the Russians [were] hiding their heavy losses."

She said many of the 150 Jews



New immigrants wait at the Ben-Gurion Airport absorption hall after fleeing Chechnya.

who had remained in Grozny were now trying to get to Israel. The Jewish Agency has been bringing out the so-called mountain Jews from the area for several

months already, Gur said. "Our infrastructure extends throughout the northern Caucasus and we are there whenever needed," he said.

The refugees were provided with food, first aid, medical attention and documents by the agency's emissaries in the area, he said.

Arab MKs decide today how to vote on budget

EVELYN GORDON

ARAB MKs will decide today whether or not to vote for the budget, following a second meeting with Finance Minister Avraham Shohat.

The first meeting with Shohat took place yesterday, and negotiations will continue today.

Shohat told the MKs that he could not agree to the NIS 250 million increase in the budget they were demanding, and he could not even promise to shift budgets within the various ministries to increase funding for the Arab sector.

However, he said, he would certainly talk with the ministers in question to see whether funding for the Arab sector could be increased within each ministry. Education Minister Amnon Rubinstein, who participated in

the meeting, suggested building additional classrooms in the Arab sector this year, which are badly needed. He also promised that the extension of the school day until 2 p.m. in distressed neighborhoods would include Arab districts as well.

Darawshe said that if additional funding for the Arab sector could be arranged within the ministries, that would help the situation. However, he said, the Arabs also have specific demands, such as the cancellation of the purchase tax on agricultural lands.

After today's meeting with Shohat, the Arab MKs will decide how to vote on the budget, he said. But if at least some of their demands are not met, he warned, they will not hesitate to vote no.

Foreign Ministry will still pay for Histadrut's emissaries

DAN IZENBERG

THE Foreign Ministry decided to go on paying the salaries of eight Histadrut officials working abroad for Israel on labor-related matters even after State Comptroller Miriam Ben-Porat revealed the anomaly, a senior Foreign Ministry official revealed yesterday.

The disclosure came during a Knesset State Control Committee discussion of the arrangement which was revealed in a report on the Foreign Ministry by Ben-Porat.

Ben-Porat also revealed yesterday that the ministry's Department for International Cooperation had not known that it had been paying salaries to Histadrut officials for the past 30 years. Committee chairman David

Magen called on the Foreign Ministry to immediately stop paying the salaries. He also demanded that the ministry's deputy director-general for administration, Nissim Ben-Sheer, make a thorough study of how many employees and emissaries who do not belong to the ministry are on the ministry payroll.

Magen estimated that the Foreign Ministry had paid tens of millions of shekels over the years to the Histadrut officials.

In reply to a question by MK Shaul Yahalom (NRP), Ben-Sheer revealed that the ministry had debated the salary issue after Ben-Porat filed her report, but decided to continue paying the salaries of the Histadrut officials.

Teva fails in production bid for Prozac

RACHEL NEIMAN

TEVA has failed in its bid to be allowed to manufacture the anti-depressant drug Prozac which is under patent by the US-based Eli Lilly company.

Yesterday the Tel Aviv District court overruled a patent office decision granting Teva a coercive permit to manufacture the drug.

The anti-depressant has steadily gained popularity for effectiveness without creating serious side effects. Under Israeli patent law, a local company may be allowed to manufacture a given product against the patent-holder's wishes, if that patent is "ill-used," according to the law offices of Dr. Shlomo Cohen, who represents Eli Lilly in Israel. Cohen's team maintained the coercive permit was a drastic step, intended for use only in cases when the national market is in danger as a result of ill use.

The court decided it could not justify damaging Eli Lilly's property in order to safeguard the interests of competing manufacturers, "even if one is Israeli and the second a foreign [concern]."

KNESSET BRIEFS

Vote on Segov, Goldfarb delayed

The government agreed to postpone the vote on the appointment of Yit'ud MK Gonen Segov to the position of Energy Minister and Alex Goldfarb to Deputy Housing Minister until next week. Speaker Shevah Weiss explained to Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin that the debate on the appointment would disrupt the procedures for voting on the budget this week which will continue until Thursday even without interruptions.

Barak: Meiri didn't have magazine in rifle

Outgoing Chief of Staff Lt.-Gen. Ehud Barak revealed that Shmuel Meiri, the soldier who was almost lynched in Ramallah two weeks ago, did not have his magazine in his rifle. Barak added that Meiri had already been serving in the reserves for 10 days and had undergone rifle practice before the incident. He said Meiri was saved in spite of his behavior, not because of it. D.I.

Court refuses to release Edri

THE Jaffa Military Court yesterday rejected a request by Lt. Oren Edri's attorney to release his client from jail until the end of legal proceedings. Edri was arrested in September on suspicion of transferring IDF weapons to a right-wing underground, and the court remanded him on September 19 until the trial's end.

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